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THE TIMES



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WEDNESDAY APRIL 21 1999

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EVERY
WEEKDAY

● Prime Minister states war aim ● Defeat of Milosevic a 'moral imperative'

Blair: No compromises

BY MICHAEL EVANS AND CHARLES BREMNER

TONY BLAIR committed Nato to a moral crusade against President Milosevic yesterday, saying the bombing would continue until the Yugoslav leader had been forced to "step down".

Later it was made clear that the Prime Minister was not announcing a new Nato objective - the overthrow of Mr Milosevic - but saying that the defeat of the Yugoslav leader was a moral imperative.

On a visit to Nato headquarters in Brussels, Mr Blair said there would be no deals or compromises with Mr Milosevic after the "appalling" scenes of violence and brutality in Kosovo.

He said: "To see people herded on to trains and taken away from their homes and to hear the stories that those refugees have come back from Kosovo with - and heaven only knows what - we shall find when we go into Kosovo - to hear those is to either awaken our conscience and make us act or is to say we have no conscience and no will to act in the

air campaign was backed last night by Baroness Thatcher, who said the war had to be won and who advocated the use of ground troops.

As a reminder of Mr Milosevic's unpredictability, 300 Yugoslav soldiers crossed from Montenegro into a United Nations-monitored demilitarised zone in the Croatian Prevlaka peninsula yesterday. They seized the border control point from Montenegrin police and closed the Delbeli Bridge border crossing with Croatia.

Croatia called for the troops to be withdrawn and urged the Security Council to ensure strict implementation of the resolutions covering the Prevlaka peninsula, south of Dubrovnik. The territory, which controls access to the Kotor inlet along the coast of Montenegro, where the Yugoslav Navy has a base, has been the cause of a longstanding dispute.

Nato revealed that Serb forces had begun to attack Albanians in Montenegro. Jamie Shea, the Nato spokesman, said this was a "new and distressing development".

Serb forces and Albanian troops exchanged fire across the border yesterday in the first clash since the start of the Kosovo crisis. One Albanian soldier was reported injured.

It was also made clear yesterday that the focus of the Nato summit, starting in Washington on Friday, would be to underline the unity behind the air campaign, as well as to seek consensus for tightening the economic sanctions against Yugoslavia. In particular, there will be a demand for new measures to stop illegal oil supplies reaching Belgrade from ports in Montenegro.

The possibility of sending in ground forces into Kosovo is expected to be raised at the summit. Sandy Berger, the US National Security Adviser, said that Nato leaders would discuss it, although the alliance was unlikely to change its policy of air strikes.

But Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, told the Commons that it was possible to "conceive of circumstances in which it may be feasible to commit ground troops", provided they were not faced with "organised armed resistance" and the Serbs were withdrawing from Kosovo.

Mr Blair sent the same signals, drawing a distinction between a full land invasion against a robust Yugoslav Army and going in against troops severely damaged by weeks or months of Nato bombing.

Mr Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said it would be the "largest release of intelligence material" ever authorised by the British Government.

Appearing at a joint press conference at the Ministry of Defence, Mr Cook said Britain had collated material on more than 50 separate incidents.



American soldiers arriving at Tirana yesterday, the vanguard for several hundred paratroopers who will guard Apache helicopters in Albania for Serb war casualties.

Cook's secret atrocity dossier

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE EDITOR

BRITAIN is to hand over all the intelligence it has acquired about atrocities and mass rapes committed by Serb troops in Kosovo to Judge Louise Arbour, prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said it would be the "largest release of intelligence material" ever authorised by the British Government.

Appearing at a joint press conference at the Ministry of Defence, Mr Cook said Britain had collated material on more than 50 separate incidents.

It included "not just the gruesome details of the incidents themselves, but the names of the units operating in the area at the time and the names of their commanders".

"We want to make sure that those brought to justice are not only the thugs who committed the crimes but those who gave the orders," Mr Cook said.

Although he did not explain how the material had been acquired, it is likely it has come from a combination of signals intelligence - eavesdropping on Yugoslav military communications - questioning of refugees and covert operations within the Yugoslav province.

Mr Cook said he had handed over more than 100 documents to Judge Arbour yesterday, which had been collected by the British Embassy in Belgrade in the months leading up to the present conflict.

This material provides a running commentary on a sustained campaign of brutality going back over the last year," Mr Cook said.

Judge Arbour made it clear that while she welcomed the support given to her by the Government and by other Nato governments, none of the intelligence material would be used in court unless it had been fully corroborated by other means.

She said this was crucial because the tribunal had to be seen as an independent legal

body, and not one driven by a "political agenda". She would not confirm whether the United States had also offered to hand over intelligence.

But she indicated that without such covertly-acquired material, it would be difficult to build up the evidence to make a case stick because she had "no access to electronic surveillance or wire taps".

She refused to disclose whether she was investigating President Milosevic.

Another possible war crime was revealed yesterday when a Nato official said reports had been received of the Serbs using Albanian boys as young as 14 as "blood banks" for their injured soldiers.

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Gunmen run riot in school

TWO men in black trench coats and masks walked into a Denver high school and opened fire indiscriminately at groups of children yesterday (Damian Whitworth writes). Several children were carried out covered in blood, but amid chaotic scenes it was uncertain if anybody had been killed.

Police were searching the school - Columbine High in Littleton - for the gunmen, who were believed still to be inside armed with automatic weapons. There were reports of explosions and a fire and some witnesses said that the men had been throwing grenades.

"We saw three people get shot," one girl said. "They were just shooting. They didn't care who they shot. They were just shooting. They were throwing grenades."



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After 24 years, Thatcher seeks peace with Heath

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

BARONESS Thatcher sought to end the longest running feud in British politics last night by publicly lavishing praise on Sir Edward Heath.

The former prime ministers have hardly exchanged a word since 1975, when Lady Thatcher succeeded Sir Edward as Tory leader. Lady Thatcher chose a party celebrating the 20th anniversary of her rise to power to bury the hatchet.

Before 1,000 guests at the Hilton Hotel on Park Lane in London, she referred to the feud with a joke at her own expense. She said that when she announced her candidacy for the Tory leadership, her husband, Denis, told her: "Good Lord! You must be mad, but I'll support you all the way!" Lady Thatcher told the guests: "I suspect that Ted Heath,

turning" - was a reference to that U-turn.

Lady Thatcher, 73, and Sir Edward, 83, who was a joint guest of honour with William Hague, the current Tory leader, also appeared at a rare joint photocall for the press.

The feud began in 1975 with Sir Edward's resentment at losing the party leadership to Lady Thatcher. He was also unhappy when she subsequently failed to make him Foreign Secretary in 1979. They also clashed repeatedly over Europe, as they held entirely opposite views.

Tory historians were quick to point out the sting in the tale: many Tories never forgave Sir Edward for his U-turn in the 1970 manifesto when two years later, he introduced an incomes policy and a new interventionist approach to industry. They pointed out that Lady Thatcher's famous remark - "This lady is not for

Photograph, page 2

BBC bows to
the regions
BBC Television's Six O'Clock News is to introduce regional headlines to quell anger over the corporation's refusal to give Scotland its own news bulletin. Page 8

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Down on the forest floor, a world doctrine stirs

Halfway through Foreign Office questions yesterday, a most unfortunate accident befell a backbench MP. A new Labour poodle's pager got stuck on auto-beep and his confusion was pitiful.

This sketch is not certain that the victim was the ultra-loyalist Ernie Ross (Lab, Dundee West). Nor was Madam Speaker. But her face turned to thunder as a continuous *whistling came from the vague direction of the government benches*. Mr Ross was seen fishing in his pocket, struggling with a tiny machine. Perhaps (like others) he was just checking. The

bleeping combined with the squeaks and bellows of backbench MPs triggered when the general wickedness of "abroad" is discussed. The sound was reminiscent of the Amazonian night.

Being creatures of the forest floor, MPs cannot always see whether their arguments tend. But swinging in the vines above, we monkeys of the press sometimes can. Through the jungle noises it was just possible to discern a new tune: a new theory of world order. You could call it the Ashdown doctrine.

Answering Oona King (Lab, Bethnal Green & Bow) the Foreign Secretary repeat-

MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

ed the British position: that when this war is over, it will be impossible to hand Kosovo to anyone.

So what was to be done? Robin Cook did not use the word "protectorate" but described an administration run by an alphabet soup of international bodies. Anagram-freaks advise that from UNO, EU and OSCE it is possible to construe "U cu noose".

Paddy Ashdown dares to say protectorate. He first used

the term some three weeks ago. But the Liberal Democrats resisted the temptation to crow, "I told you so". May be in their minds they are moving forward to the next international protectorate.

Various candidates for this status suggested themselves yesterday. David Heath (Lib-Dem, Somerton & Frome) was concerned about the protection of East Timor. MPs who joined the discussion lagged some way behind

their own logic when they argued, first, that Timor was a European responsibility (of Portugal, the former colonial power); and, second, that its hapless population faced humanitarian catastrophe at the hands of the Indonesian Government. Apparently the most appalling massacres have taken place: a kind of genocide.

So far MPs are arguing only for sanctions. "Cut off funds," one demanded. Ann Clywd (Lab, Cynon Valley), taking a break from her customary calls for Western protection for Turkish Kurds, wanted to pile the pressure on Indonesia. Nobody has yet

suggested bombing Jakarta. Then there was southern Lebanon. Backbenchers leapt in on this argument, some accusing Israel of illegal settlements there, others more sympathetic to the Israeli quest for security. Nicholas Soames (C, Sussex Mid) wanted a new European initiative. Sir Sydney Chapman (C, Chipping Barnet) wanted action to create a "demilitarised zone".

There were worries about the Falklands. MPs did not reach the question from Tam Dalyell (Lab, Linlithgow), inquiring about the "humanitarian objectives" of the Iraqi no-fly zones (including the Kurdish

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prisoners return to crime in two years

More than half of prisoners released from jail are reconvicted of a serious offence within two years of walking out of the prison gates, according to a Home Office study published yesterday. Among young offenders, 76 per cent are reconvicted within two years, increasing to 85 per cent of those who were convicted of theft.

Almost 75 per cent of burglars released in 1994 were reconvicted within two years – one third of them for the same offence. There is little difference between reconviction rates of prisoners or those given probation or supervision orders. Letters, page 23

More complain about solicitors

Complaints to the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors are at a record level. From September 1997 to December 1998, there were 41,380, which Peter Ross, Office director, said was "jeopardising our ability to protect the public". It is six months before complaints are allocated to a case worker – a delay likely to double by 2000.

Lawrence man appears in court

David Norris, 22, of Chislehurst, Kent, a suspect in the Stephen Lawrence murder, was granted bail by Sevenoaks magistrates, charged with taking 32 cases of empty soda siphons worth £224 on Monday. He will appear in court next month with Jamie Acourt, another Lawrence suspect, and Danny Caetano, 23.

Man faces 15 sex assault charges

Sidney Cooke, 72, a former fairground worker, appeared before a judge at Reading Crown Court yesterday to face charges of serious sexual assaults on children and adults. He faces a total of 15 charges relating to offences that he allegedly committed between 1972 and 1980. He was remanded in custody.

Shipyard deal is weeks away

Swan Hunter confirmed yesterday that it had moved to take over the threatened Kvaerner Govan yard in Glasgow, but that a deal is still weeks away. Norman Brownless, the Swan Hunter commercial manager, said a formal takeover of the yard, which employs about 1,200 shipbuilders, would take time to finalise.

NHS fails to check locums

Nine out of ten NHS trusts do not check the qualifications claimed by the locum doctors they employ and only one in five asks about criminal convictions, according to the Audit Commission. The consequence is that 35 per cent of all hospitals found locums were responsible for mistakes or poor performance last year.

Pressure grows on Woodhead

Pressure on Chris Woodhead, the Chief Schools Inspector, mounted when Derek Foster, Chairman of the Commons Education and Employment Select Committee, said that he should be dismissed. The Labour MP considered confidence in Mr Woodhead had been too damaged by allegations of an affair with a pupil.

Watchdog spells out supercrop dangers

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

COMMERCIAL genetically modified crops could ruin wildlife unless there is tight regulation, the Government's chief scientific adviser said yesterday.

Sir Robert May said they could intensify the dramatic post-war decline in songbirds, insects, wild flowers and hedgerows. The technology was the next "notch up in realising the dream of agriculture, from its birth 10,000 years ago, of growing crops that no one else eats but us".

This raised serious concerns about fields bereft of the weeds, seeds and bugs on which birds and wild animals depend.

Professor May said that he shared the concerns expressed by English Nature, the Government's wildlife advisers, and environmental groups.

MPs warned of terror virus

TERRORISTS may be creating genetically engineered viruses to spread deadly diseases through civilian populations, MPs were told yesterday (Nick Nuttall writes). Professor Sir Robert May, Tony Blair's scientific adviser, said: "I have little doubt that in Iran and Iraq people are thinking about doing nasty things."

Sir Robert, giving evidence

PROTEST BAN FAILS

A High Court judge turned down an application by Monsanto, the multinational biotechnology company, for injunctions against protesters who ripped up 200 gene-altered maize plants in Oxfordshire. Justice Kievean said yesterday they may have a defence. A full hearing follows in a few months.

But opting out of the worldwide drive to develop genetically modified crops was not an option, he said. About 86 million acres, roughly one and a half times the size of Britain, were already producing such crops. Over the coming years a battle would be fought to produce more food to feed a booming world population.

Britain needed to be a player on the world scene, helping to bring in controls and regulations that preserved the environment and maximised the potential rather than the prof-

its from gene-altered crops. "I do not believe that what was good for General Motors was good for the United States and I do not believe what is good for Monsanto is good for the world," Professor May said.

He likened Britain's role on gene-altered crops to its role in helping to broker agreements on climate change in Kyoto, Japan, two years ago in the face of stiff opposition from the United States and the world's oil industry.

Britain should not replay its historical mistakes with such technologies as liquid crystal displays and the development of the computer, he told MPs. It should not miss out on a new industry and the prosperity and jobs that will arise, especially given the country's role in developing much of the basic science.

Professor May said that his views were "shades of grey rather than crisp black and white, which characterises far too much of the debate on GM foods and agriculture".

Some fears seemed misplaced, he said. Some scientists and wildlife groups had given warnings that genes from crops resistant to herbicides and insects could cross with wild plants to create superweeds. But 25,000 trials worldwide, including many in the United States, had failed to find evidence of that.

Letters, page 23

to the House of Commons Environment Audit Select Committee, said that to those in chemistry, developments such as nuclear power could be used for good or evil. Genetic engineering had a similar potential for misuse to nuclear weapons or chemical or biological weapons.

"This whole technology could be bent to terrorist

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مكتبة من الأصل

Billy Bunter's weakness is no joke

UNA HAMILTON-WRIGHT

PEOPLE who steal down to the kitchen in the night to indulge in Billy Bunter-type feasts are not just greedy: they could be seriously ill.

Albert Stunkard, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania and an expert in eating disorders, told a conference in London yesterday that "night eating syndrome" should be classified alongside anorexia nervosa and bulimia as a serious illness.

Professor Stunkard, who has specialised in treating people with eating disorders for more than 40 years, said that 10 per cent of obese people and 15 per cent of the general population suffered from the night eating condition. Most, but not all, were obese.

Sufferers wake three or four times during the night and at least half the time cannot resist sneaking downstairs for biscuits or slices of cake. Between the end of dinner and breakfast they consume half their daily intake of calories, 70 per cent in the form of carbohydrates.

On average, the sufferer will eat about 450 more calories than the recommended daily average of 2,000 for a woman and 2,500 for a man. "This is pure comfort food," Professor Stunkard told the Eating Disorders Conference. "They are eating to medicate themselves."

He said the illness is probably more common among men than women. Stress seems to be a trigger but, unlike other eating disorders, children and adolescents do not submit to it.

The typical sufferer, he said, gets up after a bad night's

Night eating syndrome should be treated as a serious illness, an expert says. Ian Murray reports

sleep and skips breakfast. Many still do not feel hungry enough to eat lunch, but by dinner time they begin to eat normally.

The meal, however, is little more than an *hors d'oeuvre*. It is only when the plates are cleared away that night eating syndrome sufferers really start to pile on the calories, trying

to satisfy an almost uncontrollable craving for carbohydrates.

Professor Stunkard said he had carried out tests that showed that the sufferers' melatonin levels dropped at night. Melatonin is a hormone, normally secreted by the pineal gland in the brain during the night, which helps

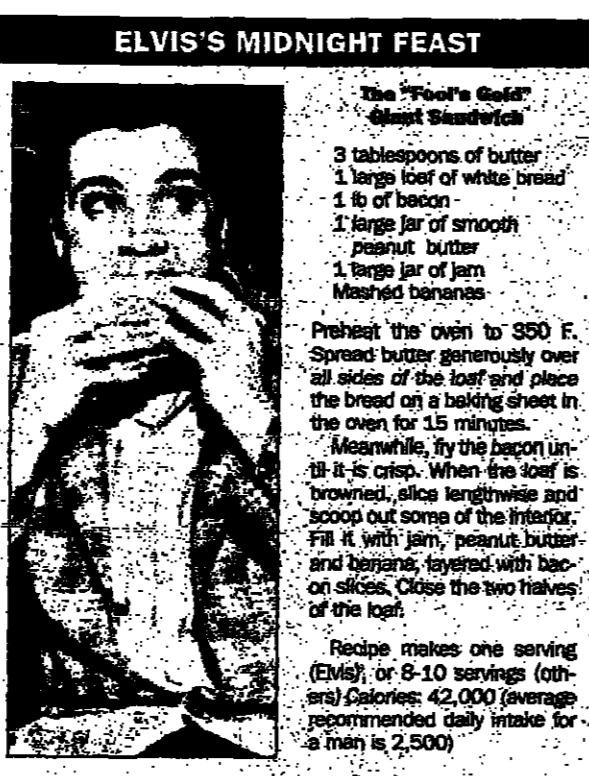
to control body rhythms, including sleep patterns. Lack of it is a cause of insomnia.

There was also a fall in levels of leptin, a hormone produced by fat cells that signal when the body has had enough to eat. A shortage means an individual does not know when to stop eating. At the same time there was an increase in cortisol, the hormone associated with stress and depression. The night eater tries instinctively to counter this by eating carbohydrates which push up production of serotonin, the hormone that controls mood.

Professor Stunkard said that trials were needed to find out whether patients treated with melatonin — not available in Britain — would be cured of their insomnia, thus breaking the cycle of night eating. "I don't think behavioural things like putting a lock on the fridge would work," he said. "Someone with night eating syndrome would get round that one."

He first published a paper suggesting the condition might exist in 1985, but this had been ridiculed until recently, when modern research into hormones pointed to the reality of its existence. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* is expected to publish his new, up-to-date paper on the subject this summer, finally making the condition recognised as a genuine, separate kind of eating disorder.

"The trouble is that we don't know very much about the condition yet because it has not been properly recognised," he said. "When it is we can expect progress in treating it."



ELVIS'S MIDNIGHT FEAST

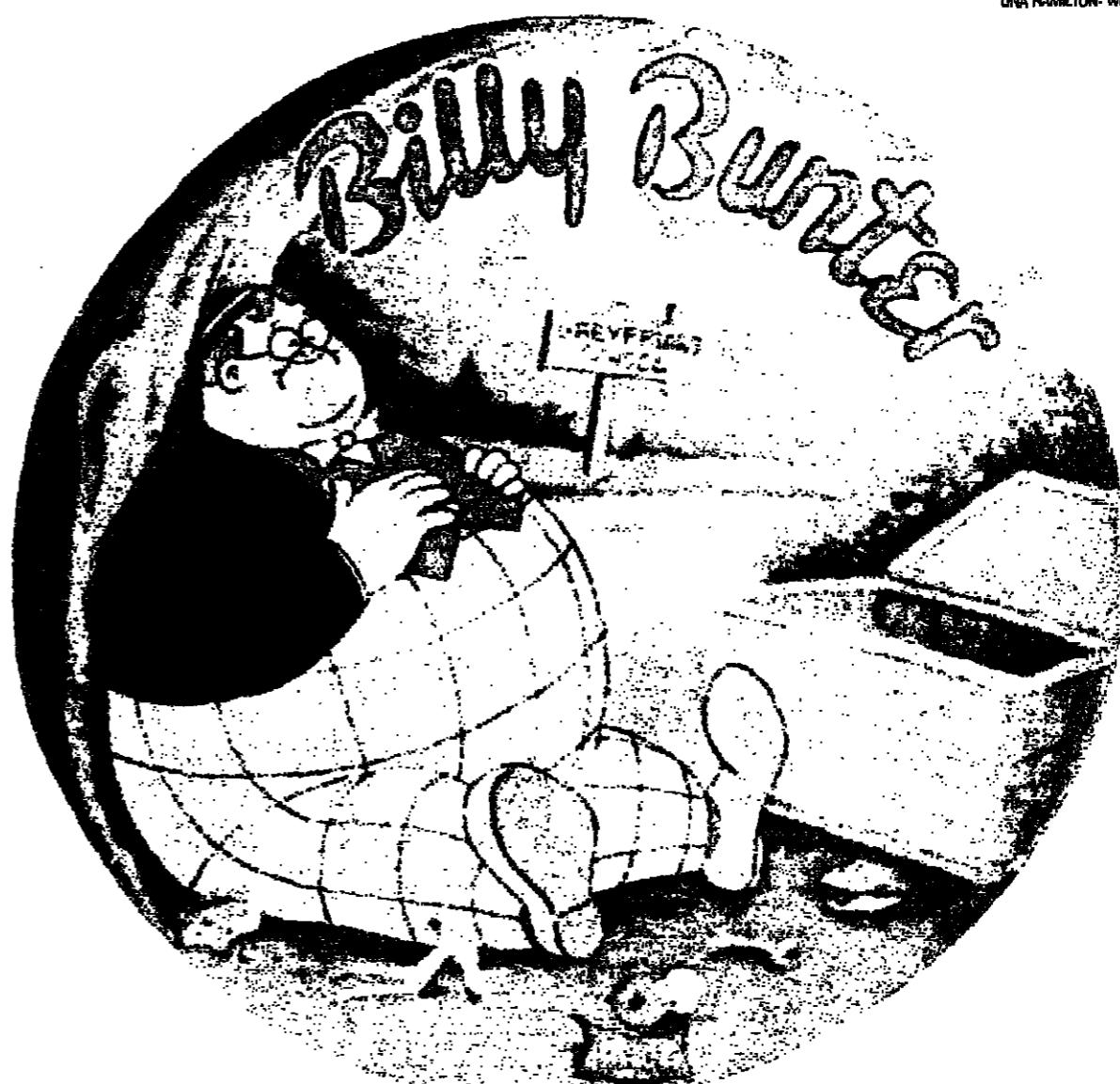
The "Fool's Gold" loaf

3 tablespoons of butter
1 large loaf of white bread
1 lb of bacon
1 large jar of smooth peanut butter
1 large jar of jam
Mashed bananas

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spread butter generously over all sides of the loaf and place the bread on a baking sheet in the oven for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, fry the bacon until it is crisp. When the loaf is browned, slice lengthwise and scoop out some of the interior. Fill it with jam, peanut butter and bananas, layered with bacon slices. Close the two halves of the loaf.

Recipe makes one serving (Elvis); or 8-10 servings (others). Calories: 42,000 (average recommended daily intake for a man is 2,500)



Billy Bunter was happiest when his stomach was full, day or night. Night eaters probably eat only one meal a day

The lure of the larder looms large after dark

STUFFING and starving has always been one of the hallmarks of bulimic patients and they often supplement the periods of starvation by inducing vomiting and purgation. A variant of this behaviour is the night-eating syndrome.

Sufferers barely look at food throughout the day but when they return home and supper is cleared away, they empty the refrigerator, and possibly the deep freeze too. They gorge mostly on sweet carbohydrates: cakes, biscuits and bread.

Although the habit of night eating has been little described, doctors have, for as long as I can remember, been aware that there are patients who do this.

Diana, Princess of Wales, was well known as someone who was apt to raid the larder when the rest of the house was asleep, but a more notorious sufferer from night-eating syndrome was Robert Maxwell.

As a young man, the former chief of Mirror Group Newspapers remained comparatively svelte, but as he grew older he suddenly started to put on huge amounts of weight, despite a modest appetite throughout the day.

The scenes of gluttony that greeted his cleaners when they came to clear up the chairman's kitchen at The Mirror next morning are still described. Apparently two or

MEDICAL BRIEFING

three chickens which he had reduced to bones were left lying around and had served the same role as that of a cup of hot chocolate for an earlier generation in their battle against night starvation.

Elvis Presley was another who deserved his excesses for the night: by the early 1970s his weight had ballooned to 20 stone because of spectacular evening binges. He would eat nothing for most of the day, and then enjoy a breakfast fit for a king about 5 or 6pm. This involved butter

milk cakes and the "sweet treats" of fried white bread and jam sandwiches first made for him by his mother. But by the early hours of the morning his cravings became overpowering.

Midnight feasts regularly arrived at Graceland, bearing obliging chefs to cook him fried peanut butter and banana sandwiches or the infamous "Fool's Gold" loaf. He could eat two of these at a sitting, even after snacks of hamburgers and pizza. Before morning he may have consumed up to 100,000 calories, equivalent to the daily needs of an Asian elephant.

Bulimia is likely to be associated with more generalised psychiatric disturbance than is anorexia nervosa. Whether night-eating syndrome deserves to be classified as a distinct entity is uncertain, but a description of the behavioural pattern and any associated physical changes is useful. It is unlikely that one simple remedy will cure this problem. These patients may well be rather disturbed and need careful assessment.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

Robert Maxwell was a notorious night eater

Rigging claim scuppers hearing

By A CORRESPONDENT

A NAVAL trial in Portsmouth was abandoned because the Navy's Chief Prosecutor, Commander Nick Hawkins, allegedly told an officer's wife that he had "rigged" the prosecution evidence against her husband.

Commander Hawkins has now left the Navy, and is currently head of the Crown Prosecution Service in Wiltshire. It is claimed that he made the remarks at his own retirement party, when he allegedly told Tracey Hawkes not to worry about her husband's pending prosecution.

Mrs Hawkes told a hearing that Commander Hawkins had said: "He will be okay, I have rigged the case."

Mrs Hawkes' husband, Lieutenant Jonathan Hawkes, was facing charges, along with another officer, Commander Captain David Humphrey. Judge Advocate Captain David Humphrey said the behaviour of Commander Hawkins was improper and the case against Commander Wheeler had to be dropped.

Woman must pay for lovers' gifts

By SUSIE STEINER

A WEALTHY businessman yesterday won £10,000 from his former lover as payment for every item that he bought her during their three-year relationship.

William Parker, 51, went to court to claim £18,000 from Helen Holdsworth, including £1.75 for a lock for her lavatory door, £25 for a garden trellis and £4 for an oil filter. The items, he said, were a loan to Miss Holdsworth, 38, because she was in financial trouble.

Miss Holdsworth, who has two children, one of whom Mr

Parker has admitted is probably his, said outside the court: "My enduring concern will be for other single mothers and their children and for the doubt which is thrown upon the possibility of constructing human personal relationships founded upon mutual trust."

Mr Parker's original claim included £1,300 for a mortgage repayment, as well as sums for car repairs and renovations to her home.

Judge Bishop, agreeing the settlement at Kingston County Court, was told that Ms Holdsworth would have to take out a loan to pay the £10,000. However Mr Parker agreed to transfer a Volkswagen Golf that he had bought from Miss Holdsworth, back into her name. The bulk of her costs have been covered by legal aid.

Outside the court Mr Parker said that he had never been in love with Ms Holdsworth.

"I was in there for a bit of sex but I was also there to help someone in need," he said.

"She agreed we would put it on a tab and she would pay me a lump sum rather than

scrabbling about for £12.50. I don't see a moral issue here."

Miss Holdsworth was charged £1.75 for a lock

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BALKANS WAR: THE DISSENTERS

Party shocked by MP's secret trip

Leftwinger's unofficial journey to Belgrade is likely to result in a reprimand, writes Andrew Pierce

THE left-wing Labour MP Alice Mahon will be carpeted by party bosses for a secret trip to Belgrade without seeking permission.

Party leaders were astonished when the MP for Halifax disclosed details of her journey during a Commons speech in which she criticised her Government's support for NATO.

Even more perplexing for the Labour leadership was the disclosure that *The Mirror*, the traditionally Labour-supporting newspaper which has championed the military action, organised and party financed the £850 excursion.

"I am not going to give figures. But *The Mirror* paid some and I paid some. It cost me £100 to £200," said Mrs Mahon. "I never accepted any hospitality from the Serbian Government. All I took was two cups of black coffee."

Challenged about why she had not sought party permis-

sion, Mrs Mahon was emphatic: "The whips would have tried to stop me. They would at least have applied heavy pressure."

While Downing Street defended the right of MPs to launch solo peace initiatives, Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, likened critics of the war effort to those who appeased Hitler.

"There were people who opposed action being taken against Hitler and I am ashamed that there are some members of the Labour Party who are saying things defending what the Serbs are doing," she said on BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*. "They are entitled to say it and I am entitled to think it."

An unrepentant Mrs Mahon was last night already discussing plans for a second trip to Yugoslavia at a meeting at Westminster of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, which she chairs. "I came back even



Mahon: "I only want to help the refugees"

more convinced the bombing will not work because ordinary Yugoslav families told me they will never give up," she said. But the weekend trip, accompanied by a journalist from *The Mirror*, which included two interviews for the state-controlled Serbian media, could well be the last.

Not only were Labour whips bemused that they were not told in advance but the Foreign Office was concerned to discover Mrs Mahon had become only the second Western MP to visit the region since the

bombs started dropping. The Foreign Office was anxious about security implications and the potential publicity premium for the propaganda-hungry Serbian authorities. One Whitehall source said: "We have to beware the risk of MPs unwittingly becoming the toast of Belgrade."

While the MP was coy about the costs, *The Mirror* confirmed that it paid Mrs Mahon's £854 air fare and £55 towards her hotel bill.

Piers Morgan, the Editor, said he was aware that Mrs Mahon was a bitter opponent of Tony Blair's policy. "When we were offered a visa into Yugoslavia it was too good an opportunity to miss," he said.

The MP and journalist were taken by Serb government officials to sites damaged by bombs.

Mrs Mahon said yesterday:

"I was not a help for Milosevic. I refused to meet him or any ministers. I only want to help the refugees to go home. I would walk a million miles if I thought it would help."

Mired in mud, page 7
Simon Jenkins, page 22
Letters, page 23



Tony Blair on a visit yesterday to Tornado crews who are flying sorties over Yugoslavia from Brüggen, Germany

Labour divided by passions of war

Party's wounds may not heal soon, Roland Watson writes

THE war in Kosovo has produced a split on the Labour Left that will take a long time to heal. Clare Short's denunciation of the 11 Labour MPs who voted against the Government in Monday's debate on the crisis as an "absolute disgrace to the party" illustrates not just the division but the strength of feeling behind it.

In calmer times many of the eleven would be considered political soulmates of the International Development Secretary. But the passion of their opposition to Nato's actions in Yugoslavia runs as fiercely as that of fellow leftwingers convinced that this is a just war.

Even the closest of friends find themselves on the opposite sides of the fence. Alice Mahon, a vigorous critic, has her office next to her close Westminster colleague Ann Clwyd, a passionate advocate.

The divisions are partly generational. Many of those opposed to the conflict learnt their politics in the postwar era and hope that the authority of a fledgling United Nations could help preside over a new world order. Tony Benn, the former Cabinet minister and MP for Chesterfield, and Tam Dalyell, MP for Linlithgow, fall broadly into that category.

There is also a fiercely anti-American streak running through the opposition to the war, represented by George Galloway, MP for Glasgow Kelvin and Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North.

Other members of the 25-strong hard left Campaign group arguing against Nato action — including Mrs Mahon, MP for Halifax; Alan Simpson, MP for Nottingham South; Llew Smith, MP for Blaenau Gwent; Audrey Wise, MP for Preston; and Neil Gerrard, MP for Walthamstow — are driven by a mixture of instinctive dislike

of military action, concern about the legality of Nato's operation and fears for the civilian population of Belgrade.

Of the others who voted against the Government on Monday night, Bob Wareing, (Liverpool West Derby), is a long-standing friend of Serbia. Bob Marshall-Andrews (Medway) is a maverick rather than a leftwinger.

Those members of the Campaign group who support the bombing tend to be younger. Many have come to politics from a background of social libertarianism rather than class conflict. They have also developed their beliefs during a time when belief in the supremacy of the nation-state

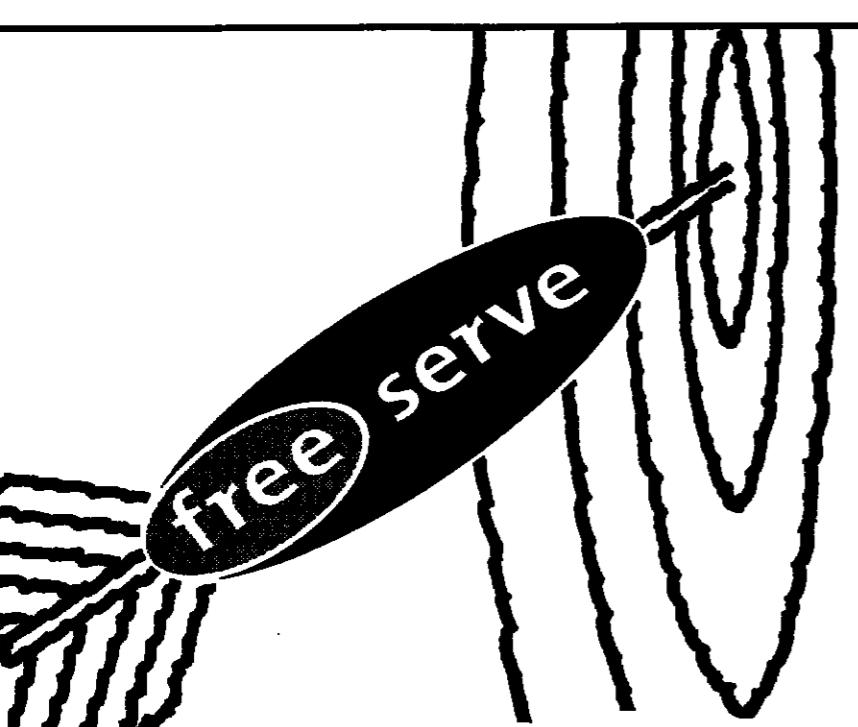
Livingstone and Harry Cohen, both Campaign members. Television pictures and newspaper reports of refugees that may evoke images of the Nazi Holocaust are also a critical factor among some MPs.

It is noted by some observers that those MPs with a high Muslim population in

their constituencies tend to support the war strongly. But Denis MacShane said the Muslims in his Rotherham constituency had put him under little or no pressure.

Among the humanitarian arguments for intervention are concerns at the rape of ethnic Albanian women. Tess Kingham (Gloucester), former international aid worker, told the Commons: "We strongly believe we had a moral imperative to intervene."

One MP claims the conflict amounts to "the first socialist war". He says: "This is a Christian alliance going to war with a Christian country in defence of Muslims and to help defeat totalitarianism and genocide. These are the kind of values that brought many of us into the movement."



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BALKANS REBELS

The rebels, led by Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow) and Tony Benn, (Chesterfield), were: Jeremy Corbyn (Islington N); George Galloway (Glasgow Kelvin); Neil Gerrard (Walthamstow); Alice Ma-

bon (Halifax); Bob Marshall-Andrews (Medway); Alan Simpson (Nottingham S); Llew Smith (Blaenau Gwent); Bob Wareing (Liverpool W Derby); Andrew Wise (Preston).

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BALKANS WAR: EUROPE'S FAULT LINES

Nervous start for Nato new boys

Central European
recruits may
soon regret they
signed up, writes
Roger Boyes

THE thump of Nato bombs battering Subotica, six miles from the Hungarian border, has brought home the price of alliance membership for the new entrants – Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

As the Kosovo war rages on, the new boys are looking nervous. Participating in the Nato club was sold to their electorates as a relatively painless route to modernisation, as an affirmation of Western values and as a way of securing societies against an unstable, unpredictable Russia.

Instead, only weeks after signing up, Hungary finds itself on the front line, the Poles see an already hostile Belarus drawing closer to both Russia and Serbia, and the Czechs are worried that investor sentiment will turn against Central Europe and endanger the far more attractive goal of European Union membership.

Nato's 50th birthday celebrations this week were supposed to put the new members in the spotlight and present a fresh strategic vision for the post-Cold War era. Now the new partners are wondering what they have got themselves into and Nato is wondering whether its "open-door policy" towards Eastern candidates really amounts to a strategy at all.

Most worried of all are two countries on Nato's waiting list, Bulgaria and Romania. Ivan Kostov, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, heads for Brussels today to ask for "additional security guarantees"



Feeling the strain: Albanian children go home from school carrying a box of food sent by aid organisations to help families who have taken in refugees from Kosovo

from Nato. Bulgaria has opened its airspace for Nato strikes on Serbia and is coming under heavy criticism from the Socialist opposition; the popular mood is turning against the war and against the Government. Every day the country is losing nearly £1 million.

Romania, too, is suffering, above all from the blocking of the Danube; every week of the war it is losing £6.2 million in export earnings. If this is the price of Nato eventually accepting Romania, it is a high one, paid well in advance. Romania is trying very hard to make the grade. Its soldiers now double-march to a US Marine chant which has been adapted to say: "Green leaves on a noble trunk. I am a gendarme,

a proud man. We are the gendarmerie. Protecting democracy." This may not qualify for any big musical awards but it does underline the effort being put behind every aspect of Eastern Europe's military adaptation to the alliance.

As Janusz Onyszkiewicz, the Polish Defence Minister, says: "You can't change your geography but you can change your geopolitics." That means, in the Polish case, shifting bases from the west of Poland to the east, teaching officers English, kitting up soldiers with Western equipment, trimming the army from 220,000 to 180,000 and raising its professional component. That costs money and even taking into account Nato co-financing of the infra-

structural improvements, Poland and the other new allies are in deficit. Airbases are being converted into golf courses, nuclear bunkers into wine cellars to help to pay the bills.

The sums add up for the new boys only if Nato membership brings a swift improvement in their security. For Hungary that seems far from certain. There are 300,000 ethnic Hungarians in the Vojvodina region of north Yugoslavia; they are terrified that Budapest might beat the Nato drum too loudly and turn Serb wrath against them once the Kosovo killing has stopped.

Novi Sad, populated by Serbs and Hungarians, has come under almost daily bombardment and any association

with Nato draws contempt. There are irredentists in Hungary who would want autonomy for Vojvodina should Kosovo gain independence. The Hungarian border zone, in other words, is likely to stay unstable for a long time. Budapest's contribution to the Nato campaign is correspondingly low.

The Czechs have reacted churlishly to the air attacks. While President Havel supports the war, Milos Zeman, the Prime Minister, and Vaclav Klaus, the House Speaker, have expressed doubts and criticised Nato sympathisers as "warmongers". Czechs were the least enthusiastic of the Central Europeans about Nato membership, partly because of the lukewarm attitude

of their leaders, and are unhappy about the present war.

There were always two potential crises facing an enlarged Nato: a spreading Balkan war, and a post-Yeltsin succession crisis thrusting Russian nationalists into uncomfortable prominence. The new members were not sufficiently prepared for their alliance role in these crises and they are increasingly uneasy.

A Kosovo war that ends up redrawing frontiers will profoundly destabilise the region. There are ethnic Bulgarians in eastern Serbia, and Serbs and Hungarians in Romania. "The place is a proverbial powder keg and it could just blow up under Nato's southern flank," says a German military analyst in Bonn. "If, for example, Kosovo is partitioned, the Kosovo Albanian part will not be viable and will have to integrate economically with Albania proper. That, in turn, will put unbearable pressure on Macedonia. Greece – a Nato member – cannot be untouched by that."

Nato's open-door policy towards Eastern Europe, to be celebrated in Washington this week, has never looked more untenable.

□ Budapest: President Gómez

of Hungary will not be taking part in the Nato summit in Washington, his spokesman said, citing reasons of protocol. The delegation will be headed by the country's Prime Minister. (AFP)

Britain set for refugee intake

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE first refugees from the war in Kosovo are expected to arrive in Britain on Friday. The Government announced last night.

A group of 120 refugees, mainly women and children, will be flown from Macedonia under the United Nations' humanitarian evacuation plans. They include single parents under difficulties in the camps and others who cannot care for themselves.

Another 18 refugees in need of medical treatment, and their 121 dependents, are also to be flown to the UK.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said: "We have made clear that we stand by to respond positively to requests from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to take displaced persons from Kosovo on a temporary basis."

The refugees will arrive at Stansted airport and regional airports before being placed in reception centres run by the Refugee Council. They will then be moved into permanent accommodation.

Those arriving this week will be given permission to stay in the UK because they have close family members here, or will get 12 months' exceptional leave to enter.

BALKANS SUMMARY

Yugoslav towns emptied

Geneva: Up to a million people have left their homes in Yugoslavia to move to safer, rural areas as Nato airstrikes continue, the International Red Cross said. Towns in the southeast of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have become homes for people who have left their own communities, and Red Cross workers believe up to 50,000 displaced people could arrive in Vranje if the situation continues to deteriorate. (AP)

One killed at offices

Belgrade: One person was killed and two hurt in a Nato airstrike on Prishtina as at least 20 explosions were heard in the Kosovo capital yesterday, the state news agency Tanjug reported. The dead and injured were at an administration building in the Prishtina suburb of Grmija which was hit by a missile. Slatina airport and a coalmine were also targeted. (AFP)

Airport inspected

Prague: A group of US Air Force specialists inspected an international civilian airport at Moscow, northern Moravia, which may be used to station Nato KC135 refuelling planes to help with airstrikes against Yugoslavia. The Czech Government has asked parliament to allow the use of its airports and both chambers are due to discuss the issue today. (AP)

US holds soldier

Massachusetts: The US has taken custody of a Yugoslav army officer captured by the KLA, the White House said. He was captured last Wednesday near Junik and delivered to the Albanian Government before being turned over to the US military. He is in good condition and will receive visits from the Red Cross and religious counsellors. (AP)

Old scores put young state at risk of inferno

Tension in south Balkans could continue into next century, writes Michael Binyon

Skopje: Greek sources say that Athens will sign a treaty when the political atmosphere is calmer.

With a population of only two million, today's Macedonia was largely an invention of the late President Tito, separated from southern Serbia to weaken Serb dominance in a federal Yugoslavia. Under the communists, the Albanian minority of 25 per cent was badly treated. Since independence, they have had more rights and freedoms.

But underlying tensions remain. The Orthodox Macedonians, whose language is virtually indistinguishable from Bulgarian, and a small number of Serbs hate and despise the Muslim Albanians. They see them as a fifth column, scheming to create a greater Albania. The Albanians, in turn, see Macedonia as part of a Slav-Orthodox plot to crush their identity. There is strong support for the Kosovo Liberation Army, and tonnes of weapons were smuggled into Albanian hands in western Macedonia after weapons stores were looted during the 1996 Albanian civil war.

Unlike 1912 to 1913, when the neighbouring countries fought each other for control of this remnant of the Ottoman empire, the surrounding governments know the cost of provoking trouble. Greeks and Bulgarians have both historically coveted the territory.

But today Athens and Sofia are committed to keeping existing Balkans borders. They have offered moral and material support to the Government of Ljupco Georgievski, dominated by moderate nationalists. But Serbia has a different agenda; and Albania, riven by instability, has little to lose by intervention.

The real danger is not outside meddling but internal collapse. If the majority fears a permanent increase in the Albanian population, it would look to Serbia for protection. It might also turn on the Albanians, with massacres that could draw in neighbours in an attempt to protect their ethnic kinsmen. A civil war would be even bloodier than the one in Bosnia. The region cannot afford a third Balkans war.

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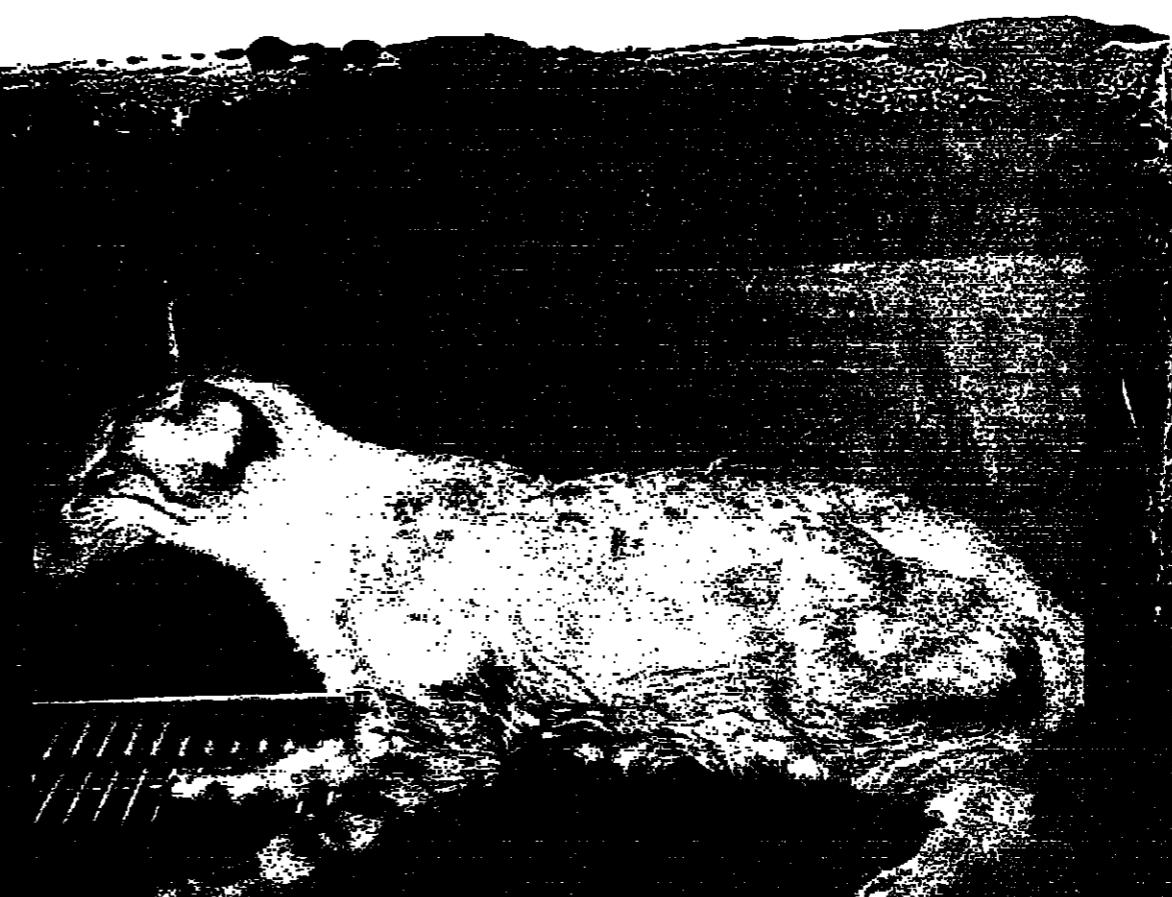
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The flat was too small to swing a cat. So it was kicked, bunched and burned instead.



When the vet inspected Raquel, he noted a fractured leg, broken ribs, blood swelling to the head and a ruptured abdomen.

The kind of injuries consistent with a road accident. Except this cat had never left her owner's flat.

You see, it wasn't a speeding vehicle that had struck her. It was a boot.

The rest of her injuries revealed a sad catalogue of suffering.

Severe burns. Scald lesions. Broken and fractured bones. Ruptures. Haematoma. Chronic arthritis caused by a fractured hock.

The owner assumed that Raquel, used to living in large houses, had incurred these injuries running round her cramped flat.

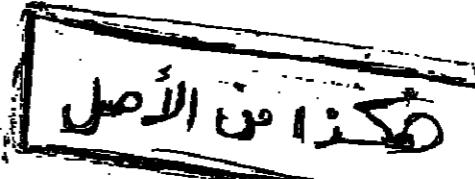
The owner's boyfriend, who was found guilty of the horrific attacks, was then sentenced to three months in an extremely cramped place of his own.

Last year, our inspectors investigated over 124,000 cruelty complaints. Thankfully, this one had a happy ending.

Under the RSPCA's care, Raquel made a good recovery and is now re-homed in a loving environment. She remains scared of men but is making steady progress.

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Despite our best efforts, cruelty to cats is creeping up every year. But with your help, we are determined to reverse this trend.



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Ginseng revives flagging Prince at Seoul feast

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN SEOUL

THE Queen was introduced yesterday to ginseng, a prized potion said to reduce blood pressure and improve stamina.

She was served it for dinner, but at the end of a long day it was the Duke of Edinburgh who looked most in need of its restorative powers.

Ginseng, served with cucumber and mustard sauce, was the first item on the menu at last night's state banquet here. The Queen remained alert and active after a day of greeting huge and admiring crowds, but the tired-eyed Duke nodded precariously close to the dinner table while his wife

was making her keynote speech. He seemed to revive somewhat once he had consumed his magical starter.

On the second day of her state visit, the Queen found herself the object of adulation by virtually the entire student body of the world's largest all-female university. It was in the sharpest contrast to a visit she made several years ago to the campus at Aberystwyth, when hostile Welsh-speaking students forced her, for one of the few times in her reign, to cut short an engagement.

They are not so curmudgeonly in South Korea, where the visit has been accorded such high importance by the Government, that even last week's dress rehearsal took precedence on the television news over a state visit by President Mubarak of Egypt. After the formalities of the first day, yesterday was for the crowds.

In case it was all too much, the Queen's tour of Ewha Women's University included a laboratory where scientists were distilling ginseng to try to discover the secret of its restorative properties. The Queen showed interest, but did not sample it. They gave her a box to take away.

Over a carefully screened cup of tea, the Queen met some of the university's notable graduates including Im Eun Jon, 33, who is the world's first internationally qualified woman football referee, and Byun Young Joo, a film director. "We have just been seeing all the films about you on television, including your life story," Miss Byun said eagerly. "I'm afraid that's rather a



The Duke of Edinburgh is caught on camera dangerously close to a camera during the Queen's speech at last night's banquet. Photograph page 28

long story," the Queen, 73 today, replied.

Even greater crowds, primed by a torrent of advanced media publicity, packed the narrow canyon of Insa-Dong, a traditional Seoul shopping street, as the Queen went walkabout. Police struggled to clear a path and curious faces peered from every upstairs window.

At a calligraphy shop she was presented with a scroll and two traditional seals with owl motifs. Across the street she visited a ceramics shop, signed her name on a white china plate with a calligraphy brush and came away with a gift of a handsome white wine pot. Then to a dress shop selling traditional outfit. There they gave her a turquoise shawl which she put on but declined an invitation to look at herself in the mirror. "No, I

know that I look very nice," she said rather charmingly. The shawl was added to the day's booty.

Outside she met Kim Baek-Soo, a member of a local cultural preservation society attired in the extremely elaborate dress, complete with massive black wig, of a Korean queen of the Yi dynasty. By

contrast, the Head of the Commonwealth looked like an ordinary lady on a shopping trip.

Gifts are not all one way, however. Yesterday the Queen made her host President Kim Dae Jung an honorary Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, and gave him a pair of silver-framed photographs and a 19th-century print of

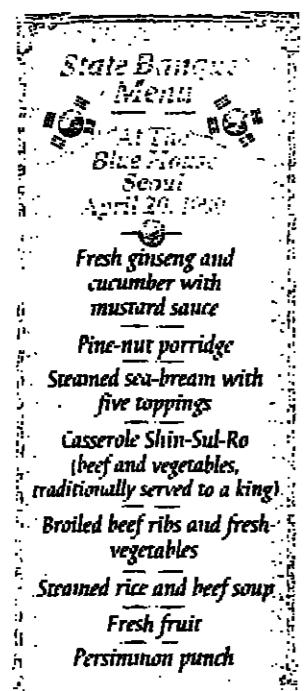
Cambridge, where the President spent some time.

The state visit is largely about trade but there is much recognition of Britain's part in the Korean War, which has left the peninsula divided for nearly half a century. At the state banquet given by President Kim last night the Queen referred to current events near

er home. "At a time when hostilities are again very much on our minds in Europe, we in Britain recall that some 87,000 British servicemen and women, along with military contingents from other Commonwealth countries, fought in those three years of the Korean War, many as part of the Commonwealth Division. We

must never forget that 1,078 made the ultimate sacrifice."

□ Porn warning: The Duke of Edinburgh, saying that clever crooks and peddlers of pornography were exploiting the Internet, urged South Korea's business leaders to ensure that highly trained technology managers were also grounded in ethics and morality. (PA)



'Man-root' prized by Mongol rulers

BY HELEN RUMBLE

GINSENG has a royal pedigree as great as the Queen's, since Mongol emperors ate the "king of herbs" in search of long life and an heir up to 4,000 years ago.

Then as now it is a symbol of Korea, but it has been much coveted by the Chinese for the effects of its Yang energy, some of which have now been proved scientifically.

Its name is derived from the Chinese for "man-root" because its 10in fleshy white tendrils often assume a human shape.

The older and bigger the root becomes the more human it looks. Although most

are harvested after six years, in 1994 a farmer pulled up a 5in root claiming it was 600 years old. He was paid £140,000 for it in Beijing.

More than 12,000 tonnes of ginseng is produced annually, most from the damp woodlands of Korea.

Its power is the stuff of myth, with the best quality given to the Koryo kings in Korea as well as Chinese dynasties who prized it as an aphrodisiac and food for warriors.

Chinese herbalists use the root in tea as a tonic for the elderly. It affects the adrenal gland which produces stress-related hormones.

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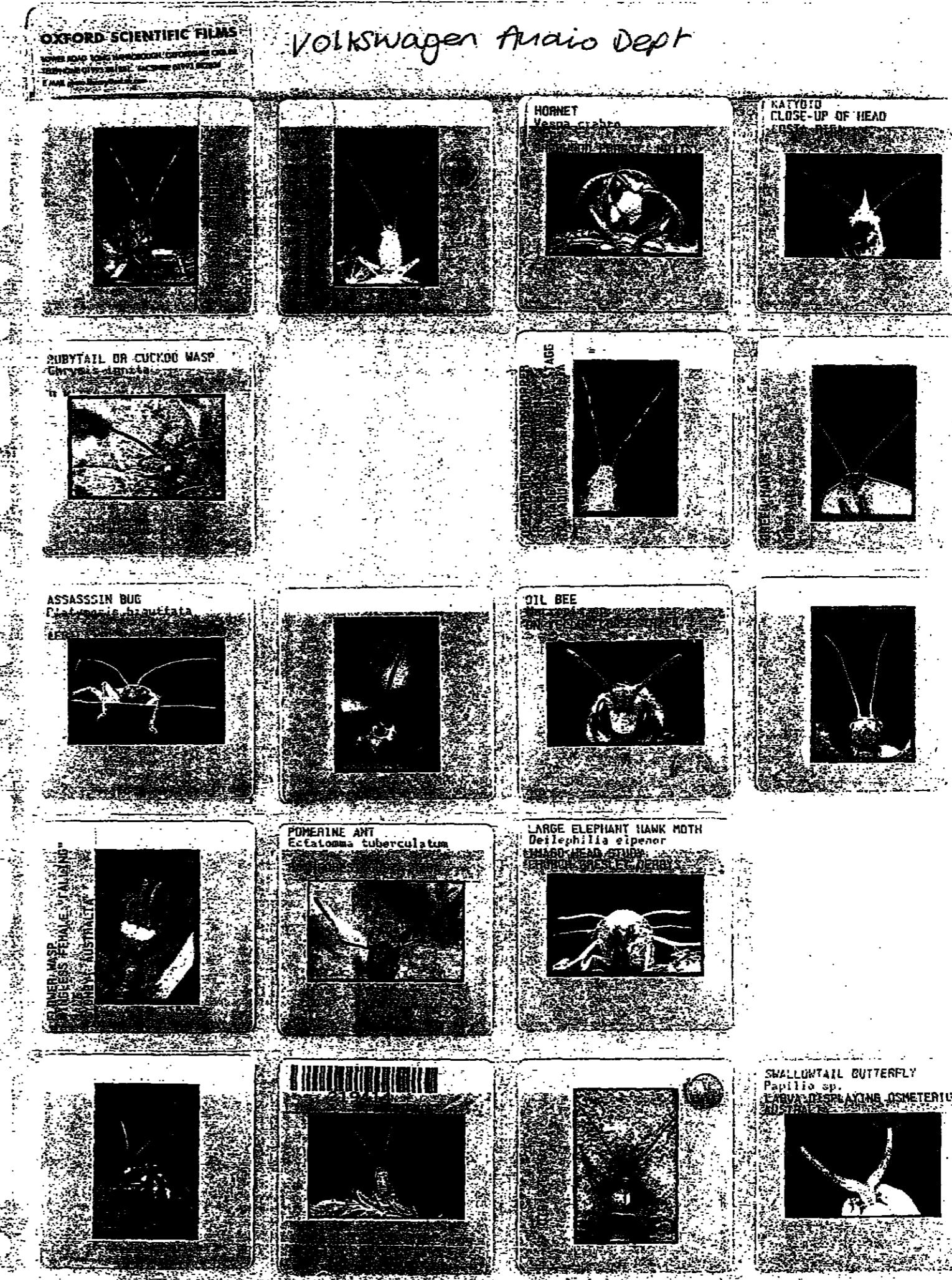
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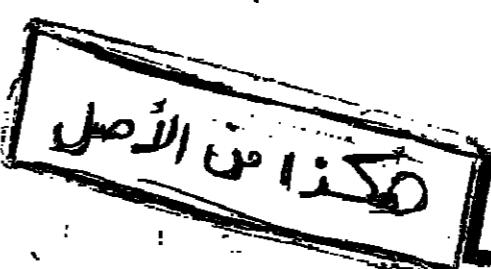
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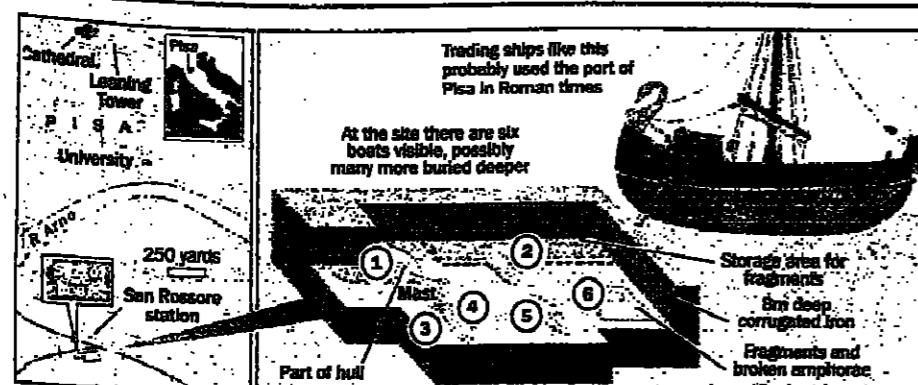
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Roman ships dug from lost Pisa harbour

Scholars are celebrating a rare insight into maritime life 2,000 years ago, reports Richard Owen in Rome

BRITISH and Italian classical scholars yesterday hailed the discovery of eight almost perfectly preserved Ancient Roman ships buried in the mud of what was once the harbour at Pisa as "an astonishing step back into the past" and a "rare insight into Rome as a maritime and trading power".

One wooden ship, with an elongated prow, is thought to have had a military purpose. "I confirmed, this will make it the first Roman warship ever found," said Stefano Bruni, the Tuscan archaeologist in charge of the dig.

Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, director of the British School at Rome, said that the ships were "extremely impressive, outstandingly well preserved, and in pristine condition... I could hardly believe the wood before my eyes was not modern-day wood in a modern boat. It is as fresh as the day the ships sank. This is very exciting find."

He said he believed that "perhaps a fifth of the boats have been uncovered... there is even more to come".

Giovanna Melandri, the Minister of Culture, said the find was "of exceptional im-

portance. The archaeologists have uncovered a marvel, both because of the state of preservation of the ships and the numbers involved... the ancient port of Pisa has come to life before our eyes."

"The Roman fleet emerges from the mud of Pisa after two thousand years," said the head-

of-the-railway station is being held up, but railway officials said that

'Some may have foundered, others sunk in storms, and others went to the bottom in a flood'

rare" to find Roman ships in such numbers. They range in length from eight yards to thirty yards.

The ships, which are believed to date from the third century BC to the fifth century AD, had all been anchored in a port at the confluence of the River Arno and the River Arno. They were under pressure to resume work despite the prospect of more historic finds. San Rossore will not only control high-speed traffic but serve tourists visiting Pisa during the millennium.

The Romans controlled the Mediterranean as if it was a lake," Professor Wallace-Hadrill said. "They called it Mare Nostrum — Our Sea — and these ships show the range of goods that was being traded in a culturally diverse

they were under pressure to resume work despite the prospect of more historic finds. San Rossore will not only control high-speed traffic but serve tourists visiting Pisa during the millennium.

The Romans controlled the Mediterranean as if it was a lake," Professor Wallace-Hadrill said. "They called it Mare Nostrum — Our Sea — and these ships show the range of goods that was being traded in a culturally diverse

area." He said that there were no giant grain ships of the kind that plied between Egypt and Rome among those uncovered. "I think what we are looking at here is a lagoon harbour which was probably linked to the coast by a canal. Big ships moored off the coast, and these smaller vessels unloaded goods and came up to Pisa."

"They probably also plied up and down the coast. One of them has a distinctive type of sand in it which I am told comes from the Bay of Naples, suggesting that it put in at Naples to take on ballast, before chugging on up here."

Some of the boats used oars while others were under sail. A mast has been found in one of them. "These are not just odd remains but whole vessels, with hulls, planks, wooden pins, nails, even baskets and jars."

Professor Bruni said that the excavations were continuing. "The fleet was obviously much bigger than the eight ships found so far," he said. "We knew the site might have artefacts of archaeological value, but nothing like this."

Wood spotted six yards

down in the dark grey silt turned out to be the hull of a ship. The archaeologists even found the remains of rope used to tie the boats up in the harbour.

Professor Wallace-Hadrill said the ships were in an exceptional state of preservation because they had been encased in damp mud. To ensure they are not damaged by exposure to the air, specialists have covered the wooden remains in a layer of varnish and protected them with fibre glass. The boats will later be soaked in distilled water.

Professor Bruni said the archaeologists had also found hundreds of amphorae that once contained fruit such as cherries and plums, and chestnuts and walnuts, as well as

olives, wine and oil. The jaw bone of a wild boar suggested the boats carried live animals. "For me this is one of the most important aspects of the discovery," Professor Wallace-Hadrill said. "We have tens of thousands of amphorae from Pompeii and other sites, but know little about what they really contained. This gives you the feel of the range of goods ferried around the Mediterranean." The dates of the amphorae provide clues to the dates of the ships, which will be confirmed by carbon dating of the wood.

The Superintendent of Archaeology at Pisa, Guglielmo Micali, said it appeared that the ships had all fallen victim to a "Pompeii-type catastrophe, perhaps a flash flood which overwhelmed them". But Elena Rossi, one of the leading archaeologists working on the ships, believes that they had all suffered different fates at different times. "Some may have foundered, others sunk in storms, and others went to the bottom in a flood," she said.

Professor Wallace-Hadrill said Roman ships had been

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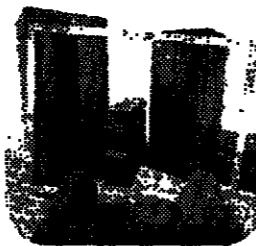
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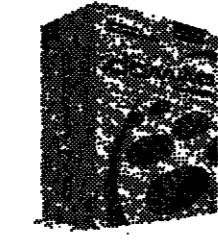
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Welcome to the collapse of the Conservative Party

Tories are not only politically irrelevant but are also in danger of appearing ridiculous. After attempting to remake the party's image and William Hague's style in the manner of a failing middle-market paper, the leadership is now in a muddle over policy. The confusion cannot just be dismissed as a linguistic and "spinning" fust. It reflects distinct and inherently contradictory strategies.

On the one hand, William Hague has said the Tories would "re-establish the economic and

moral case for low taxation" and praised an "excellent" Centre for Policy Studies pamphlet by Maurice Saatchi and Peter Warburton calling for an overhaul of the tax and benefit system to slash the tax burden. On the other hand, Peter Lilley has highlighted the limits to the role of the free market and defended taxpayer funding of public partnerships.

Mr Lilley sought to answer criticisms that the Tories do not care about welfare services and are interested only in privatisation. The public overwhelmingly supports

universal health, education and welfare provision funded by the taxpayer. There are limits to the application of insurance either in health or social security since those most in need would not be covered or only at very high premiums, as in the United States. That does not, however, exclude public-private partnerships.

However, accepting that such services will remain "predominantly taxpayer-financed" limits Tory ambitions to cut taxes. Repeated squeezes on government running costs and cutbacks at the margin

helped to reduce the relative size of the public sector from a peak of 47 per cent to 41 per cent by the time the Tories lost power in 1997. But that was only achieved through the exercise of strong political will by the Treasury and it will be hard to cut the share much lower. There is

no way that the tax burden could be reduced from its current level of more than 37 per cent of national income to the immediate Saatchi/Warburton objective of 33 per cent, let alone to their ultimate goal of 30 per cent, as in the 1950s, without violating Mr Lilley's pledge.

If Mr Lilley's lecture was full of subtle realism, the Saatchi/Warburton plan is full of grand simplicities. The authors dress up their ideas as in the trite populism of "Independence Day", a national holiday when people stop working for the Government and start working for

themselves. But the plan has the appealing theme of ending the overlap between taxes and benefits and exchanging tax allowances, reliefs and exemptions for lower tax rates. There is a lot to be said for tax neutrality and simplicity. But there would be a large number of losers, who would see their benefits and special tax reliefs eliminated.

However, if the Tories want substantially to cut taxes, that inevitably means a smaller welfare state. If they accept Mr Lilley's analysis, how would the Tories differ from new Labour? The key to Labour's success in 1997 was having a clear and credible strategy. The failed media operation backed that up, but was secondary. The Tories need to sort out where they stand.

Hague stands by his man as Tory revolt erupts

WILLIAM HAGUE tried to face down a Shadow Cabinet revolt last night by staking his authority on the abandonment of Thatcherite ideals of reforming the health, education and welfare systems.

With Baroness Thatcher looking on at an event to mark the twentieth anniversary of her election as Prime Minister, Mr Hague threw his backing behind a move by his deputy Peter Lilley to shift the Tories away from the quest for free-market solutions to the problems of health, education and benefits.

He did so after at least three members of the Shadow Cabinet protested over what they saw as Mr Lilley's attempt to ram through radical change without discussion. They complained that his move had cut short their options in the party's policy review.

Because of the internal dissension caused by advance billing of Mr Lilley's remarks — from which he did not retreat when he delivered them to the Carlton Club last night — Mr Hague devoted a portion of his speech celebrating Lady Thatcher's anniversary to supporting his deputy.

The Hague-Lilley plan is the biggest rhetorical break with the Thatcher years since Mr Hague became leader. It has been prompted by "focus group" findings that much of the Conservatives' unpopularity derives from the public belief that they would privatise

Lilley's rejection of Thatcherite ideals sparks Shadow Cabinet anger, writes Philip Webster

health, education and social security.

A source close to Mr Hague compared the move with Tony Blair's crusade to scrap Clause Four. "Blair slayed the paper dragon of Clause Four because of the perception that it meant Labour would nationalise everything even though we all knew that they would not. Now we have to slay the paper dragon of the perception that we will privatise health and education, even though of course we would never have done that."

In his speech Mr Lilley said the Conservative "Achilles heel" was the party's supposedly hostile attitude to the welfare state, particularly health and education. He repeated that the Tories could only renew public confidence in their commitment to welfare if they "emphatically accept that the free market has only a limited role in improving public services like health, education and welfare".

In a remark that astonished

some Thatcherite MPs, he added: "Unless and until we are prepared to accept that there is more to life and more to Conservatism than defending and extending the free market we will always be on the intellectual back-foot where the public services are concerned."

Mr Lilley's words had alarmed frontbench colleagues. Iain Duncan Smith, the Shadow Social Security Secretary, demanded and got a meeting with him on Monday but he refused to budge. There were also strong complaints from Gillian Shephard, the Shadow Environment Secretary, that the move had not been cleared with the Shadow Cabinet, and from Ann Widdecombe, the Shadow Health Secretary, whose main policy proposals since her appointment last summer have included ideas for large injections of private money into the health service.

At a private seminar yesterday Michael Portillo also underlined his attachment to private-sector solutions although he made plain that he was not commenting on Mr Lilley's move.

Mr Hague told the Shadow Cabinet that he would be backing Mr Lilley, and sources close to them said there would be no public expressions of discontent. "They are unhappy but he is the leader and they must accept it," one said.

Leading article, page 23



The Scottish Green Party put four faceless models on the streets of Edinburgh yesterday to support their claim that the environmental policies of other parties in the elections to the Scottish parliament are uniformly grey

Three steps to their tax heaven

Tim Hames on how administrative savings could pay healthy dividends

THE programme outlined by Maurice Saatchi and Peter Warburton is aimed at eliminating the complexity that has entered the tax and benefit system over the last 40 years. Income tax "celebrates" its bicentenary this year. It will shortly reach some 39 per cent of national income — the highest peacetime level. Despite this steadily increasing burden, public demand for higher spending on health and education continues to outpace the ability of elected politicians to deliver. Saatchi and Warburton aim to reverse this ratchet through three initiatives.

■ The progressive elimination of present arrangements

which involve comparatively small amounts of taxation being extracted from relatively poor people who then have the same money returned in the form of benefits. The Government now extracts Income Tax and National Insurance contributions from 17 million households with incomes below £20,000 a year, seven million of which earn less than half that sum. Almost all of these people then receive benefits that have been in part

drained by tax contributions. Saatchi & Warburton seek a single cut-off point above which people would be taxpayers and below which they would receive benefits.

■ An assault on the 250 tax allowances, credits, exemptions and reliefs that clutter the tax system. These would be abolished to make way for one single large personal allowance and permit a further lowering of tax rates. The same broad principle was followed in the United States during the

CAMPAIGN FOR SCOTLAND 99

Scots 'have lost their enterprise'

The nation which produced Adam Smith has been accused of losing its entrepreneurial spirit. In a lecture tonight, David Bell, Professor of Economics at Stirling University, will claim that lack of motivation will hinder economic growth. He will also reject SNP claims that an independent Scotland could, like Ireland, become a "Celtic tiger" economy and tell young Scots to look abroad and learn lessons from the Far East.

QUOTE of the day

Jim Wallace, Scottish Lib Dem leader, on anti-drugs policy.

"Banging a drug offender up in prison is like locking an alcoholic up in a brewery."

today's AGENDA

Donald Dewar will play bingo in Maryhill while Labour's press conference will focus on science and technology. Jim Wallace, Scottish Lib Dem leader, launches a "Better Business Charter". The Tories talk about drugs.

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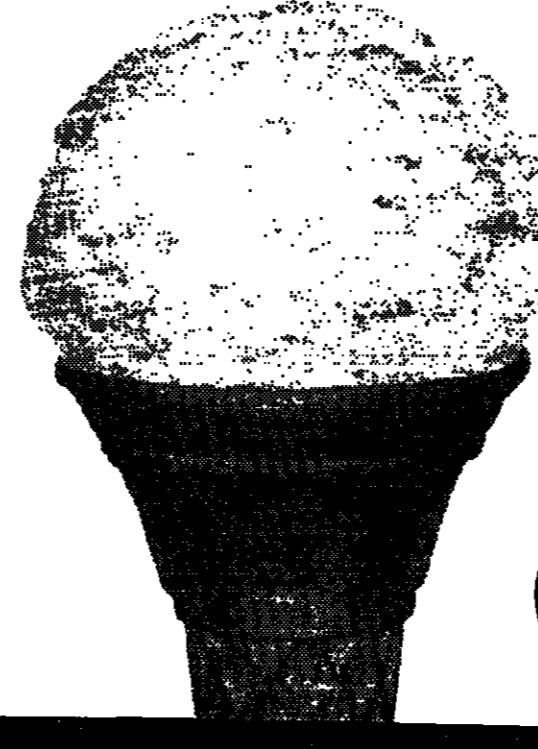
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Bones put man in bed with Neanderthals



Neanderthals shared space and time with modern man, but DNA tests indicate that the two never interbred

THEM AND US

Neanderthal man

- Large head with projecting nose, large teeth and a prominent brow ridge
- Not tall but stocky and muscular; taller men were about 5ft 7ins
- Bones of upper arm much bigger and stronger. Hips suggest that Neanderthals were very active as children, probably following the adults as they hunted and foraged
- Brain large but lying behind the face, not on top of it. The back of the skull was balloon-shaped, with a series of bony crests just behind the ears
- Died out about 30,000 years ago, but may have survived longer in areas such as Spain and Portugal, out of the way of modern human beings
- No language, art or culture

Homo sapiens

- Flatter face, higher forehead and smaller nose than Neanderthal man but larger chin, smaller teeth
- Taller and more lightly built; men four to six inches taller than Neanderthals
- Brain almost identical in size to Neanderthals (1,200-1,700cc) but located higher above the face
- More sophisticated use of tools, reflected in less strongly developed bones and muscle in upper arm
- Possessed language, developed art and practised ritual, as in the burial of the dead

Nigel Hawkes reports on a scientific discovery that throws new light on the origin of *Homo sapiens*

THE skeleton of a four-year-old child who died 24,500 years ago reveals that Neanderthals and modern man interbred, an American palaeontologist has claimed.

The skeleton, found in the Lapedo Valley north of Lisbon, has the sturdy limbs of a Neanderthal but the pronounced teeth and chin of *Homo sapiens*, says Erik Trinkaus of Washington University in St Louis.

The suggestion conflicts with genetic evidence extracted from Neanderthal bones, and published two years ago, which indicated that there had been no interbreeding.

The opportunity was certainly there. Anthropologists believe that the two populations did overlap, both in space and time.

Neanderthal man emerged about 300,000 years ago and did not die out until well after the appearance of *Homo sapiens* about 100,000 years ago. In southern France and the Iberian Peninsula traces of both species, dating to about 30,000 years ago, have been found in the same places. But most experts have dismissed the idea that they might have interbred.

Professor Trinkaus says the Portuguese skeleton provides the proof. "This skeleton, which has some characteristics of Neanderthals and others of early modern humans, demonstrates that early modern humans and Neanderthals are not all that different. They intermixed, interbred and produced offspring," he said. The skeleton was found



Paleontologists unearthing the child's skeleton

buried on a hillside near Leiria, 30 miles north of Lisbon and 19 miles from the Atlantic coast.

The skull had been crushed by a bulldozer but Joao Zilhao of the Portuguese Archaeological Institute led excavations which found a well-preserved lower jaw and skeleton.

"This find refutes strict replacement models of modern human origins — that early modern human beings all emerged from Africa and wiped out the Neanderthal population," Professor Trinkaus said.

A leading exponent of the Out of Africa theory, Chris Stringer of the Natural History Museum yesterday told BBC Online that he expected the find to make a "major contribution" to debate on how Neanderthals died out.

If interbreeding did occur, modern man will carry genes inherited from Neanderthal ancestors. But this conflicts with the DNA evidence, published by a team led by Svante Paabo of the University of Munich, which showed that Neanderthal DNA differed equally from the DNA of modern man on all five continents.

Had there been interbreeding, the Neanderthal DNA would have been closer to that of modern Europeans because that is where the two populations mixed.

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Times in tribute to human rights lawyers

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

TWO human rights lawyers whose premature deaths last month were widely lamented by the legal profession were honoured at *The Times* Justice Legal Awards last night.

Peter Duffy, QC, who acted for Amnesty International during the House of Lords hearing on General Pinochet, was named Lawyer of the Year. A special award was made to Rosemary Nelson, who was murdered in Northern Ireland, in recognition of her courage in defending her clients "fearlessly in the face of great personal risk."

The awards were presented to the winners' relatives by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor. "All the winners have shown themselves to be outstanding in their efforts to make human rights real and accessible to ordinary people," he said.

Ane Owers, director of the human rights group Justice, paid tribute to the work of Mr Duffy, who died of cancer.

A full report on the awards will appear in *The Times* law pages next Tuesday.

Radical college sets up chair of aliens

FROM GILES WHITTELL
IN LOS ANGELES

IF ANYBODY'S out there, Berkeley would like to know: the university that invented gender studies in the 1960s has appointed the first Professor of Extraterrestrial Intelligence.

Dr William Welch will supervise the building of a three-acre field of telescopes in Northern California in a renewed attempt to answer what most scientists consider the Big One: are we alone in the universe? He does not expect a quick answer.

Using giant dishes pointed at deep space from New Mexico and Puerto Rico, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (Seti) has been seeking signals from alien life for decades, without success.

"Will we find intelligent life in space in my lifetime?" Dr Welch mused in an interview with *The New York Times* at Berkeley's Hat Creek Observatory. "It's a very remote possibility."

Seti researchers concentrate on a band of microwave radiation considered the best hunting ground. Such signals could take decades to get here, though, in 1974 a message about our solar system was beamed from Puerto Rico to a star cluster 200,000 light years away. A prompt reply would not be back for 50,000 years.

Dr Welch's job is at least a sign that Seti is about science, not little green men. Endowed to the tune of \$500,000 (£311,000) by two Seti volunteers, the professorship is a much-needed injection of money for a search stripped of most of its Nasa funding in 1993, as depicted in *Contact*, the film starring Jodi Foster.

Jill Tarter, on whom Foster's character was based, then sought private backing. She happens to be Dr Welch's wife.



Sophia Loren proves she is still the centre of attention after a presentation by Massimo D'Alema, the Italian Prime Minister, in Rome yesterday.

The 64-year-old actress, who starts filming in her native Naples in June, won the entertainment category of a government cultural award.

South Africans praise violent police tactics

Rampant violent crime has fostered a siege mentality among citizens, writes Ray Kennedy in Johannesburg

lighted that these criminals are getting what they deserve. They are raping our children and we drive around with our cars locked and walk with our keys in our hands."

Although senior officers expressed shock, most callers to radio phone-ins said: "Good for them."

Reports about the documentary, shown on *Newsnight* on Monday and re-screened last night on South African television, were the lead stories in newspapers and radio bulletins. The South African Broadcasting Corporation reported that the police unit involved, the Brixton Highway Patrol in Johannesburg, is to be disbanded.

Typical of the callers was a white woman, identified as Sue, who lives near Johannesburg, on Radio 702. She said: "As an ordinary citizen, I'm de-

pect injured after a hijacked car crashed is filmed being hit in the stomach and about the head with a rifle butt."

The Independent Complaints Directorate said yesterday: "No less than 15 people a month die in custody or as a result of police actions." More than 1,000 police officers have been murdered since 1994.

George Fivaz, the police commissioner, has warned criminals in a country awash with guns that the police will "fight fire with fire". But Mohamed Hussein, of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, said police needed educating that they were living in a constitutional democracy.

It was emphasised in many quarters yesterday that most South African policemen and women are hard working and

honest. Judith Robb, a human rights lawyer, said it was essential that those within it who resorted to violence and behaved as though nothing had changed since its role was basically to enforce apartheid should be rooted out.

Mr Fivaz said he would order police management to investigate setting up a programme to treat officers who were suspected of having become brutalised by the daily stresses of their work.

In the BBC documentary it was reported that a senior policeman invited to South Africa from Denver, Colorado, to advise on how to deal with violent crime had been faced with two shooting incidents in a 25-year career. In South Africa one of the first policemen he met was a 26-year-old who

had been involved in 17. After the African National Congress came to power in 1994 it dismissed concerns about rising crime as a bitter white reaction to black majority rule.

The fact that crime now affects far more blacks than whites simply because of demographics has compelled the ANC to address it as a major issue in its campaign for the general election on June 2.

President Mandela, opening yet another crime prevention campaign on Monday, admitted that it would take several years to solve the problem.

Statistics show that 52 people out of every 100,000 were murdered last year which was a slight improvement on the previous year when the figure was 62. On average there is one rape every two minutes.

More than 2,000 cars and vehicles were seized from their owners in the Johannesburg area alone, mostly at gunpoint, last year.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Dogs slaughtered to halt brain virus

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia has begun killing dogs and plans to test "every species imaginable" to curb a rare brain disease that has claimed about 100 lives. At first pigs were believed to be the only carriers of two strains of viral encephalitis that broke out in October. A dozen people have died of Japanese encephalitis and recently more than 90 from a new strain named Nipah after the village where its first victim died. Despite claims that the outbreak seemed to be over, officials admitted yesterday that stray dogs had contracted the Nipah virus in the worst-hit area 60 miles southeast of the capital. (AP)

Move to oust Bhutto

Karachi: Pakistan's Parliament moved to annul the membership of Benazir Bhutto, the former Prime Minister, and Asif Ali Zardari, her imprisoned husband, following their conviction for corruption (Zahid Hussain writes). All the couple's assets can be confiscated because of their conviction. Khalid Anwar, the Law Minister, said.

Chinese 'torture'

Arbitrary and summary executions, detention, unfair political trials and tortures that include the insertion of horse hair into the penis are part of a pattern of gross and systematic abuse of human rights in the Uighur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang in western China, according to a report issued by Amnesty International (Michael Binyon writes).

Rape law toughened

Cairo: The Egyptian parliament has scrapped a century-old law exempting a rapist from punishment if he marries his victim. Parliament adopted the change after women's groups expressed outrage over the freeing of three rape suspects when one of them married the victim. Human rights activists praised the decision. (AFP)

Fatally bad hair day

Beijing: A Chinese woman died of shock when she clapped eyes on her granddaughter with dyed red hair, the *Lanzhou Morning Post* reported. The young woman went to visit her grandmother in the mountainous northern town of Meixian after working for several months as a hairdresser in the southern economic boom town of Shenzhen. (AFP)

Everglades in flames



Miami: Smoke turns day into night as Broward County firefighters watch a 130,000-acre blaze that has swept through the Everglades in three days — closing about 60 miles of Interstate 75, known as Alligator Alley, and threatening an Indian reservation. The largest of at least 2,515 fires in Florida this year, it may devour another 40,000 acres. (AP)

Apple bites back at 'carpet-bagger' Hillary

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN NEW YORK

HILLARY Clinton loves New York, but New Yorkers are loving her less.

A campaign-style swing by the First Lady through the Big Apple, where she is eyeing a Democratic run for the Senate, was marred by a new poll showing she has lost the ten-point lead she held in January.

ary over her putative opponent, Rudolph Giuliani, the city's Republican Mayor.

They are now in a statistical dead heat, 43.5 per cent for her, 42.8 per cent for him, according to a new poll by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion.

Even worse for Mrs Clinton, a majority of New York voters, 52 per cent, now think she should not run for the Senate, up from 37 per cent in February, according to the

poll. It appears that Mr Giuliani is making inroads with his denunciation of Mrs Clinton as a carpet-bagger — a politician seeking office in a state where she has no real connection.

Asked if she will run, Mrs Clinton said she was still considering the idea but was very interested. Asked why, she said: "I love New York to start with. I always have." It was "a microcosm of America".

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To have or have not



Personal Finance Editor Anne

Ashworth on the financial implications of marriage; how to make savings in the garden; and why personal pension customers could be owed as much as £4,000

Successive surveys predict the demise of matrimony, yet the institution persists. This summer a gaggle of glitterati will tie the knot, presumably in the belief that if cohabitation will soon become the norm, then marriage is chic.

The Spice Girl Victoria Adams and footballer David Beckham will unite their fortunes in June to create a £20 million partnership. Next in line are Sophie Rhys-Jones, a partner in a PR firm, who earns about £80,000, and Edward Windsor, a television producer whose income this year should be £416,000. Close behind in the celebs' altar line stand Zoë Ball, the radio and TV presenter, on a salary of £1.5 million, and Fat Boy Slim, her fiancé, whose dance-music hits should make him at least as wealthy as his wife-to-be.

Like other brides and bridegrooms of the season, these prosperous pairs will now be concentrating on the champagne for the reception and the musculation of the hen-night entertainment. The Government, however, would like couples who are in less easy circumstances to be planning the smooth operation of a joint account as well as the itinerary for the stag night. We should be considering not only the cost of the wedding but all the financial implications of matrimony, too.

The Home Office has recommended that the betrothed should be supplied with a "marriage preparation pack", with details of tax, state benefits and property rights. It also proposes that all couples should draw up prenuptial agreements in recognition of the one in three chance that their relationship will end in divorce. Usually the preserve of Old Money or of New World wealth, these documents set out the division of the marital assets in the event of a split.

However, like other government notions designed to make us more financially prudent, these plans are yet to be finalised. This will come as a relief to those who would prefer a pacy honeymoon read than benefit entitlement terms and conditions.

The contents of the pack may also be causing some embarrassment in Whitehall because they would reveal that the tax benefits of marriage are negligible to many couples, and soon to be nil. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, husband and father, is apparently concerned to support marriage. But Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and bachelor, will next year be abolishing the married couple's tax allowance.

The £1,970 allowance, worth £197 a year, will be abolished in April 2000. A year later it will be replaced by a concession given to families with children whether the parents are married or not. The children's tax credit will be worth, at most, £416 a year. The higher your salary, the less tax credit you receive, so that a household where one partner has an income of £38,500 or more gets nothing. However, if both mother and father earn £30,000 each, they will receive a percentage of the credit.

Pensioners will be entitled to

open to charges of fiscal sexism. While the Home Office strives to compile its pre-marriage pack without acknowledging that the tax system is growing less favourable to husbands and wives, *Easy Money* can provide some hints to marital financial harmony:

■ Some of the best guidance comes from divorce lawyers whose services you are less likely to need if you remain financially compatible.

Frances Hughes, the head of the matrimonial department at Bates, Wells & Braithwaite, the solicitors, says: "A lack of openness in money matters leads to problems, as does unnecessary financial dependence. Wherever possible each spouse should have their own bank account and do their own budgeting. A feeling of being powerless in the relationship, of having to ask for money, causes disagreements."

The contemporary money management model is based on three accounts — his, hers and theirs. The joint account is used to pay the mortgage and other household expenses. If one partner does not use the personal tax allowance of £4,335, a meeting should be held to discuss putting some of



Rolling down the aisle: David Beckham and Victoria Adams. Fat Boy Slim and Zoë Ball

the joint savings into his or her name only. This will allow him or her to receive tax-free interest up to the level of the allowance and limits the household's tax liability.

■ You can bequeath your whole estate tax-free to your spouse. Leave it to anyone else and inheritance tax at the rate of 40 per cent is payable on the portion above £231,000. Couples should draw up wills to take advantage of the spousal concession and the tax-free portion. Whatever the size of your joint bank balance, if your spouse dies intestate, you automatically inherit a portion of the estate; cohabitantes do not enjoy such rights.

■ Prenuptial agreements are not yet legally binding in Britain, but their popularity is rising, not only among those who wish to protect City bonuses from estranged spouses.

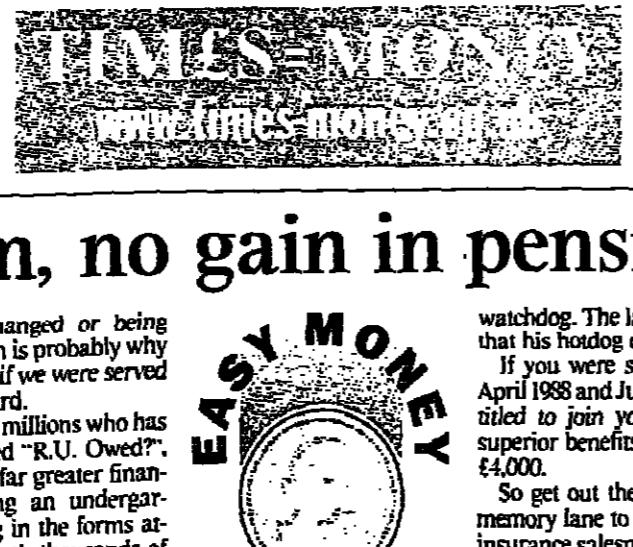
Expect soon to see the pre-nup on the pre-wedding *à la ménage* in Brides. Professional couples often believe that the ability to discuss how houses and savings will be managed throughout the marriage — not only at its ending — is a sign of emotional maturity in a prospective partner. Sarah Antonioli, of Campbell Hooper, the solicitors, says: "A pre-nup is part of sensible financial planning."

These same serious-minded young people also insure their weddings with Cornhill or Ecclesiastical against such calamities as the destruction of the dress or the bankruptcy of the catering company. Policies cost from £45. But latterday Miss Havishams should be aware that they will not be covered for cancellation of the event if the other party has a sudden change of heart.

■ Contacts: Cornhill: 0171-626 5410; Ecclesiastical: 0800 336622.



Royal match: Sophie Rhys-Jones and Edward Windsor



No claim, no gain in pensions row

NO ONE likes being shortchanged or being served poor-quality goods, which is probably why most of us would kick up a fuss if we were served a hotdog without enough mustard.

However, if you are one of the millions who has recently received a letter marked "R.U. Owed?", you have the chance to rectify a far greater financial wrong than simply getting an under-garnished sausage in a roll. Filling in the forms attached to the letter could be worth thousands of pounds if you were one of the millions who were wrongly advised to leave or never join a company pension scheme but instead were sold a personal pension. Over the past four months more than three million people have been contacted by their pensions company or financial adviser as part of the personal pensions mis-selling review. But many potential victims have yet to respond, despite an advertising campaign launched by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the City

watchdog. The latest ad features a chap who feels that his hotdog does not have enough mustard.

If you were sold a personal pension between April 1988 and June 1994 even though you were entitled to join your company's scheme, with its superior benefits, you could be owed as much as £4,000.

So get out the envelope and take a trip down memory lane to that ill-fated meeting when a life insurance salesman persuaded you that a personal pension was the only option for you.

You will be offered compensation if you can prove that you suffered a loss by failing to join your company scheme at the time. But, whatever your situation, you will get nothing if you do not return the form.

SUSAN EMMETT

● Contacts: FSA helpline: 0800 003 007

NASTY HABITS

One in four women prefers it to sex. No, it's not shopping, it's gardening. It may not be the new rock 'n' roll but there is no denying that gardening is hip. The garden centre is fast replacing the pub as the ideal place for thirtysomethings to spend their spring bank holidays. The launch of *New Eden*, a glossy magazine that seeks to do for gardening what *Wallpaper* did for interior decorating, and exclusive shops such as The Plant Room, a North London specialist that has its catalogue on CD-Rom, reinforce the claims that gardening is terribly trendy.

The problem with gardening — as with all things both modern and cool — is the expense. Prices paid by gardeners for the same goods probably vary more than in any other area of consumer spending. Small, specialist garden centres and shops are much more expensive than the big chains such as Homebase or B&Q.

At the Chelsea Gardener, a 4ft-tall Tuscan Waterlady complete with silicone implants and dispirited expression will set you back £495. Or you could purchase a decorative conservatory pineapple for £295, though why you would want to put a slightly rusty metal globe crowned with a pineapple in your conservatory is anyone's guess.

On the more tasteless side, you could splash out on an eight-seater metal and fake marble table, perfect for summer dinner parties, for £1,635. The drawback is that you also have to buy the eight chairs at £399 each, setting you back £4,327 for the whole caboodle.

If you do decide to buy outrageously priced sculptures or garden furniture, it is a good idea to insure them. Otherwise you could find yourself in the situation that Brian Sewell, the art critic, found himself in last week when *thieves made off with life-size marble busts of John Locke and Emperor Augustus and a bronze bust of an obscure Italian politician* from Mr Sewell's garden.

You can make huge savings by avoiding the trendiest garden centres and posh Islington boutiques. Frequenting the major chain stores or supermarkets can save you a packet. The price war between the big DIY chains is cut-throat. This has led to brutal cost-cutting and, especially at this time of year when stores are trying to attract customers, obvious loss-leaders. Growbags, for example, can cost just 99p.

Even for basic implements, the differences in price are staggering. A 30-metre hose from Chelsea Gardener costs five times as much as it would from Homebase. A spade costs almost four times as much: £46.95

plant to maturity — not to mention the additional saving of £810, based on the prices of the three plants mentioned here.

Added to your savings on the basics, your cost-cutting has saved a total of £1,248 — enough to pay off half the interest payments on a £50,000 mortgage for the year. Invested as a lump sum in the Barclays FTSE-100 index tracker for five years, you could save £2,500, based on past performance.

Be warned, however, that your garden may suffer as a result of all this cost-cutting. Expensive garden centres are expensive for a reason. They tend to be staffed by real enthusiasts who know the plants they are selling and the conditions in which they will flourish, so you are less likely to end up with plants unsuited to your garden or roof terrace that wither within weeks of purchase.

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The race to draw a map of humanity

Medicine tailored to the needs of the individual could be possible if an altruistic, \$45 million project is successful. However, one scientist wants to make money. Anjana Ahuja reports

There is precious little block of DNA. They are one class of genetic mutation. Some snips are harmless; others, either singly but more often in combination, render people more susceptible to diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Scientists in the consortium aim to draw one of the most important maps in scientific history — a chart of the exact location of 150,000 snips.

These minute and sparse variations are the subject of an extraordinary research project announced last week. The SNP Consortium — comprising the Wellcome Trust, ten pharmaceutical companies and five of the world's leading medical research institutes — will spend \$45 million over the next two years to identify one-tenth, or 300,000, of those variations, more properly called single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs, or snips).

The fact that rivals such as Glaxo Wellcome, AstraZeneca, Smithkline Beecham, Pfizer and Hoffmann-La Roche are joining forces is striking, since nobody will profit.

The consortium is sending out a strong message that the rapid advances being made in genetics should be shared freely for the public good, rather than being patented and sold on for vast sums.

However, according to the Wellcome Trust, Dr Craig Venter, the maverick American scientist who has broken away from the International Human Genome Project (IHGP) to set up his own commercial effort, has announced that he will compete to create a snips database.

Snips are the smallest possible change in genetic material, and occur in a single building

block of DNA. They are one class of genetic mutation. Some snips are harmless; others, either singly but more often in combination, render people more susceptible to diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Scientists in the consortium aim to draw one of the most important maps in scientific history — a chart of the exact location of 150,000 snips.

By comparing the genetic maps of sufferers with the maps of healthy individuals, doctors should be able to infer which snips are associated with specific conditions. The result will be a kind of master atlas for medical science — by examining our own sequence of snips and comparing them to this mammoth map, we could discover which diseases we might fall victim to and take preventive action.

Each disease will be associated with a handful of snips, which are one type of genetic marker," says Dr David Bentley, head of human genetics at the Sanger Centre in Cambridge, one of the participants. "Since we are looking at 300,000 snips, this project will give us an awful lot of reference points. The current set of genetic markers, called microsatellites, number 300, so this universal map of snips will give us much more detail."

This project, Dr Bentley says, is part of the genome project. However, the map being drawn in the IHGP is too low in resolution to provide the detail required to hunt for the genetic clues to disease. It would be like trying to use a world atlas to navigate a journey from Liverpool to Manchester. The snips should also

be the Sanger Centre. "It is a kind of pre-competitive project. Some of the pharmaceutical companies were sceptical at first. There was a lot of discussion but at the end of the day this was the preferred route." So what is it in it for the participating pharmaceutical

companies that have stumped up \$3 million each?

Dr Morgan sums up: "It raises the level of the playing field for everyone, for modest expenditure. It is good for us, since we would probably end up funding something like this at full cost to ourselves."

Not making such information available would stifle innovation, according to Arthur Holden, chairman and chief executive of the SNP Consortium. "The more people that have access to this tool, the more creativity and success there will be in coming up with new diagnostics and ther-

apies," he says. "I know a company that is charging \$30 million for access to a genetic database. How many companies and universities can afford that?"

"This information will lay the foundation for innovation in medicine for the next century. There will be far more competition and progress, especially among smaller companies, if the information is freely available rather than locked up by private concerns."

He says such collaborations have occurred elsewhere: "We are talking about setting up a core technical platform for the

industry. Similar things have been done in the telecommunications, computer and defence industries."

Dr Morgan points out that it would be incredibly expensive for one company to go it alone on a snip database.

Nonetheless, this is what Dr Venter is planning to do. Dr Morgan is sceptical that Dr Venter and his company, Celera, will succeed, as he anticipates the SNP Consortium will produce the "gold standard" among snip databases.

"Craig was prepared to participate in our consortium on his own terms, which was

unacceptable to us as it would have restricted access," Dr Morgan says. "Since our announcement, he has said that he is going to make his own snip map and make it ten times bigger and 20 times better than ours."

"It would be arrogant for one company to think that it had all the expertise necessary to understand the kind of information that will come out of it. We are talking about the blueprint of humanity. This is going to help us to understand what makes us human. I don't think we can fully conceive of what is going to emerge."



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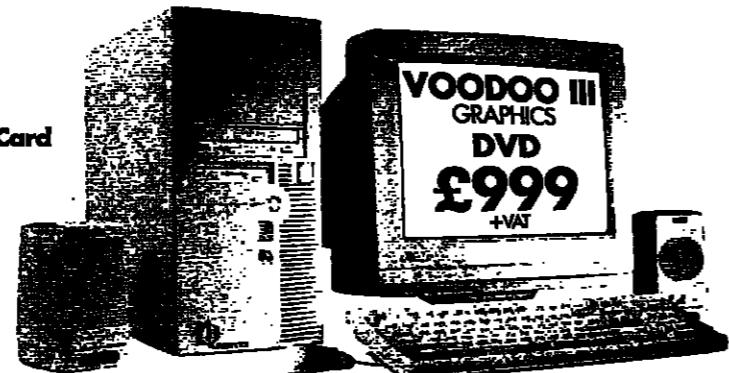
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Spot the asteroid

IT IS remarkable what you find once you start looking. Since a systematic search for near-Earth asteroids began, the numbers are piling up at a remarkable rate. Fifty-five new asteroids with the potential to collide with the Earth were found during 1998 — more than in the previous six years. None of the asteroids poses a threat, but there are plenty more to find. The American space agency Nasa, which says there are 2,000 such objects, set a target of identifying most of them within ten years. So far, 163 have been found. A new telescope, due to go on line soon, will speed up the search, but the target looks optimistic.

Dr Brian Marsden, of the Minor Planets Centre in Cambridge, Massachusetts, expects 90 per cent of the potentially dangerous asteroids to be found within 17 years.

A few years is hardly likely to make any difference, says Don Yeomans, of Nasa's Near Earth Orbit programme. He expects that if there is an asteroid with the Earth's name on it, we will get ten, 20 or 30 years' warning, enough time to devise a way of shifting the asteroid's orbit, perhaps by explosives, to ensure that it misses.

One recent discovery, called 1999 AN10, has caused controversy not because of any risk of impact but because of the way its discovery was handled.

A year ago, some astronomers were embarrassed after Dr Marsden gave warning that an asteroid might be on course for a 2028 impact. More refined calculations, when further details

of its orbit were known, showed the fears to be unfounded. The low-key announcement of AN10 is seen by some, including Benny Peiser, an anthropologist at John Moores University in Liverpool, as an overreaction to that embarrassment. The news slipped out on a website in the form of a paper from three Italian astronomers.

The interest in AN10 is that its orbit is tilted at an angle of 70 degrees and intersects that of the Earth twice a year in February and August. It is thought to be about a mile in diameter, quite large enough to do continent-wide damage if it hit. Dr Andrea Milani and Dr Steven Chesley, of the University of Pisa, and Dr Giovanni Valsecchi, of the Planetary Institute in Rome, say that it will remain close for the next 600 years.

There is, they say, a one-in-a-billion chance that it could strike the Earth in August 2039, but that is smaller than being struck by an unknown asteroid any day without warning, and not something to worry about. The long-term potential

needs careful watching, though, as the orbit of AN10 may be disturbed by its constant close approaches to the Earth, possibly increasing the chances of impact.

Dr Peiser says that he finds the lack of public notice disturbing. But astronomers seem happy with the way it was done. "I commend them for the process of being careful," Richard Binzel, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, told the *Boston Globe*. "On a scale of zero to five," he said, "this thing is a zero."

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Excuse me, what is mind-blowing sex?

"WHAT is sexy?" demands the huge red-and-white banner hanging over the Jacob K Javits Convention Center on 35th Street, usually home to New York's computer and auto shows, but this week taken over by Erotica USA, Manhattan's biggest exhibition so far about sex.

The programme promises "everything that is new and exciting in erotic music, videos, piercing and wine and spirits...". Inside, the Center is a jumble of stalls selling erotic pictures, penis fruit gums, nipple lollipops and latex clothing.

I wander over to join a small crowd gathered around a stall called The Erogenous Zone, A Swingers' Club For the Next Millennium. Behind the salesman, a tall blonde girl in micro, crutch-hugging shorts is riding a child's rocking horse and spooning melon chunks out of a plastic cup.

"It is for people who want to try swinging but haven't dared," explains Martin Davis, national sales director.

thrusting an Erogenous Zone Franchise Business Plan at me. "If you go to Kansas or San Francisco, you know what a Big Mac is going to be like: safe, clean and fun. Well, the Erogenous Zone will be like the McDonald's of sex. Our focus groups found that most people would like to try swinging but are too scared."

Above him a television set is demonstrating the Erogenous Zone's Boom Boom Room, an adult version of a bouncy castle where you can jump on dozens of inflatable sex dolls.

There is also an artist's impression of adult swings, sturdier versions of the playground variety, to be ridden while you are naked.

Martin reads aloud from the brochure: "Who doesn't have fond memories of hours spent in the playground?"

The suggested entrance fee is \$80 per couple," he continues. "Men must arrive with a female partner. Women may enter singly and are charged \$40." He adds: "We will also have a room with

stuffed animals and cuddly toys."

"Have you had much interest in the franchise?" I ask.

"Oh yes," he smiles. "It costs \$30,000 a year and next year we're opening in New



Joanna Coles
NEW YORK LIFE

York, Los Angeles and Chicago."

On the stage at the end of the hall, a tired girl dressed in a latex nun's habit is dancing to *Voulez-Vous Couchez Avec Moi?* with two men dressed

as Roman gladiators. In another stall, designed like a doctor's reception, a quartet of blondes with hugely augmented breasts are campaigning for Brad J Jacobs, "award-winning breast-implant surgeon", whose handiwork they are demonstrating. According to Brad's banner, he "invented the procedure to correct the problems of saline implant augmentation".

I pause at another stall presided over by the portly, bearded, pornographer Al Goldstein, Editor and founder of *Screw* magazine. He is wearing a florid jerkin that matches his complexion and sucking a chocolate finger.

"I'm leaving America," he announces. "I'm going to Amsterdam, where I can smoke Cuban cigars in peace. At 63 I'm an embarrassment to my

free and escape to the morning lecture.

"Raise your hands if you're comfortable talking about sexual experimentation," cries Sari Locker, the relationship correspondent for *Channel 2 News*. Today's lecture is called *Mind-blowing Sex in the Real World*. There are 28 of us in the audience. Sari, author of *The Complete Lover's Guide to Amazing Sex*, tries again. "Come on, raise your hands," she orders. Eventually, five hands go up

brightly. "Do you want to repeat your question?" The woman mouths again.

"The question is, 'How do you move from one fetish to another?'" roars Sari, making a lasso of the microphone cable and striding to the front of the stage as we all swing round to check the woman out.

"With a fetish, communication is very important, very important," Sari replies.

"And it may be, in the end, that a couple don't have sexual compatibility."

The questioner looks nonplussed and a grey-haired couple slide out.

"Any other questions?" Sari's eyes roam desperately around the room until they settle on my neighbour, an attractive older woman who half raises her hand. "What is mind-blowing sex? I mean, how do you achieve it?"

Sari nods. "Is that your husband with you?" she asks, motioning to the man sitting next to her. The woman smiles noncommittally. "Hello, sir," Sari says anyway. "I

define mind-blowing sex as when you're totally in the moment. It's like when you know that you are protected from STDs and you're not thinking about how fat your thighs are."

My neighbour stares back doubtfully. "I'm older and I have a slightly different perspective," she says hesitantly. "Do you give the same advice to married people as to young people?"

"Well, in marriage there is the issue of sexual boredom," says Sari. "But you can always try different things. Wear a wig. Lose weight. Then it's like having sex with a new body! If you're a man, buy a penile expander!"

"A woman doesn't need to have breast augmentation: she can put plastic implants in her bra," she continues earnestly. "Or have sex in a business suit!"

We contemplate this advice until, finally, another woman, sitting on her own, puts her hand up. "Can it still be mind-blowing sex if you feel lonely or sad afterwards?"

PHOTONICA

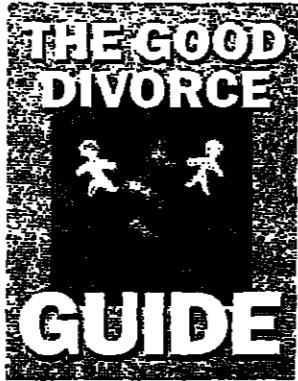
Caught in the crossfire

During the breakdown of a relationship, the subsequent separation and divorce, one or both parents will have to cope not only with their own feelings but with those of their children. Children are the innocent victims of a relationship that breaks down. They are the reason that parents remain in contact long after the dust has settled on their divorce. They are the ones whom parents should try their utmost to protect from the devastation that an acrimonious divorce can wreak. It will at times be unavoidably difficult.

If you succeed the reward will be well-adjusted and balanced children who will be able to enjoy time with both parents and who can make the most of having two homes.

Children in divorce need to know that both parents still love them; that their parents are divorcing each other, not divorcing themselves from the children. They need to know that by showing love for one parent, they are not betraying the other; that they can continue to love both parents openly without each parent competing for more love. And the only way this can be achieved is through reassurance from both parents.

But how do you do this



In the final extract from her new book, **Simone E. Katzenberg**, a family solicitor, says children must come first

when your partner is demanding contact with the children but refusing to pay maintenance, or flaunting his or her new partner while you suffer the pain of the breakdown? Or when your partner blocks or sabotages your efforts to maintain a relationship with your children? What you really need to avoid is your children being caught in the middle of a tug-of-war in which no one wins anything.

You need to be constantly aware of the effect that your behaviour will have on the children. Thoughtless or vindictive behaviour towards your partner can rebound, often unintentionally, on the children. Think before you act.

The children need time to adjust. Constant and ferocious conflict between their parents

does not help them. There must never be a contest over who has more time with the children; the children must not be made to feel that they have to choose one parent over the other. It may be that in order to avoid a battle, one of you has to back off to protect your child from a wrangle.

At each stage, step back and try to separate the way you feel towards each other from the way you feel towards your children.

Question the motive behind your actions and try with all honesty to put the children first, doing what is right for them even if it does not necessarily satisfy your needs.

How do you tell the children? At the breakdown stage, many parents cannot control their emotions in each other's presence. The children may

have been exposed to frequent tantrums and rages and it may be impossible for the parents to sit down together and explain their plans to them.

The situation at home may have been unstable for so long that the children realise it is just a matter of time before one parent goes. That in itself may be a relief to them as it will end the constant bickering and conflict.

In ideal circumstances, you may want to wait a while before you break the news to the children. However, your distress may mean that it is impossible to continue putting on a brave front.

If you can tell the children together, do so. The children can be assured that even though Mum and Dad can and will no longer live together, their continued love for them remains, independent of their feelings for each other. You can all cry together and answer questions the children may have.

Provide as much reassurance as you can that they will be able to see the parent who is leaving. What has happened has nothing to do with them but is between you as adults.

Your dual role as parents will continue.

It will be the beginning of a period of adjustment for all of you, and you must take it one step at a time.

You may be the parent who is left to tell the children without the support of the other parent.

Choose a time when no one is in a hurry to get anywhere, no guests are expected and a favourite television programme is not about to start.

Wait until homework is complete, take the telephone off the hook, hold each other and talk. If a child is about to take exams or a birthday party is imminent, it may be better to wait until later.

It is important to notify the schools of the situation and to talk to the children's head teachers. The school can give your child any extra attention and support needed, and alert you if any difficulties arise as a result of the breakdown.

If you are the parent who leaves home, notify the school of your change of address. The

school can keep you informed of all school activities and functions as well as send you reports, as extra reports need to be requested. If your relationship has broken down to the extent that you are not talking to each other at all, this is important to preserve access to information about the children at school.

During the early stages of separation, try to be perceptive towards the often silent signals that children give when they are uncertain and distressed. Encourage them to talk to you — or a close friend or other family member — about their concerns. Avoid attributing blame to the other parent. Step back and see how the children feel, and think of how you can help them. Try to put your feelings for them first. They do not need to be caught in the crossfire of emotions.

If you are the parent who has left, you may desperately want to see the children every day. Try not to demand more than your partner will permit as you will only stir up conflict, frequently in the presence of the children.

Reassure your partner that you are not trying to take the children away. If your partner does not feel threatened, you are likely to find that contact is increased. By stepping back a little you are removing the power that your former partner can exert over you.

If you have been left with the children and they speak to your partner on the phone, leave them alone and do not interrupt. If you are the carer, it does not help to criticise the other parent or to tell the children how unhappy you are.

Conflict over the children will continue if your partner is stuck in an emotional stage that you have moved through.

If you experience continual difficulties over contact with the children, keep a diary of all telephone calls and contact. This should include attempts to speak to the children when they are "unavailable" and when the answerphone is on in an attempt to block calls, and details of when contact takes place.

If you are the parent who leaves home, notify the school of your change of address. The

school and did not take place. Only time will tell how the children's relationship with the other parent develops or diminishes. Children adapt and get on with their lives. If they are confident about their continued contact with both parents, they are more likely

to accept the situation. School concerts, parents' evenings, sports days, weddings and family functions may always be uncomfortable. But somehow or other you will all adapt and find a way in which, while not necessarily grinning and bearing it, you will cope.

● Extracted from *I Want a Divorce?* by Simone E. Katzenberg, published on May 6 by Kyle Cathie, £9.99. Copyright 1999 Simone E. Katzenberg. Times readers can order this title for £7.99 with free p&p by calling 0990 134459.



Innocent victims: most children of divorced parents eventually learn to cope, but it is vital to consider their emotional needs before your own

EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE TIMES

Free book vouchers

This week *The Times*, in support of World Book Day, offers readers the chance to save on the cost of books. Printed below is the third of six vouchers that will appear in *The Times* until Saturday. Each voucher gives you £1 off any book or audiobook worth £2.95 or more, or entitles you to receive a free copy of *The Children's Book of Books* 1999 or *The Grown-Ups' Book of Books* (pictured). A voucher will also appear in *The Sunday Times* books section on Sunday. Present the vouchers, between April 23 and May 3, at one of the thousands of bookstores participating in the World Book Day offer. Only one voucher per transaction permitted. Offer subject to availability of titles in stock



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It cannot be used to purchase books in a bookshop or library, or to buy books online. 33. The voucher can only be used to purchase books in the shop. It cannot be used to purchase books in a bookshop or library, or to buy books online. 34. The voucher can only be used to purchase books in the shop. It cannot be used to purchase books in a bookshop or library, or to buy books online. 35. The voucher can only be used to purchase books in the shop. It cannot be used to purchase books in a bookshop or library, or to buy books online. 36. The voucher can only be used to purchase books in the shop. It cannot be used to purchase books in a bookshop or library, or to buy books online. 37. The voucher can only be used to purchase books in the shop. It cannot be used to purchase books in a bookshop or library, or to buy books online. 38. The voucher can only be used to purchase books in the shop. It cannot be used to

A scorpions' tale of new Labour

Roland Watson on the feuds

that poison Mandelson's life

It takes a rare mix of the brilliant and the flawed, the spiky and the exotic to elbow aside the Balkans and secure a leading slot on the war-dominated news agenda. But one Labour politician has it. Peter is back. Back in the news and soon to be back in the Government, according to the excited gossip surrounding the launch of a biography, Mr Mandelson's second of the year.

Whereas the first book took delight in helping to knock him out of Government, the mood music around the second is about rehabilitation. Mr Mandelson is less than four months into an uncertain sentence but already talk of a comeback is in the air. And the details contained in Donald Macintyre's book, published today, though considerably less explosive than Paul Routledge's home loan revelation, may yet turn out to be more corrosive.

The portrait emerging of the former Trade and Industry Secretary adds to his reputation as a famously complex man. He is a prima donna prone to fits of petulance and dramatic door-slamming exits, but also a suffering servant who is prepared to resign rather than allow his epically bad relations with Gordon Brown threaten Labour's election hopes. He is someone with enough self-awareness to parody himself as Tony Blair's "little helper". But he is also the reticent celebrity, fiercely protective of his sexuality.

Mr Mandelson has always had the power to discomfit the cautious and confound expectations. But even those accustomed to his distinctive style have raised eyebrows at his latest media strategy. Mr Macintyre's book is enlivened by extensive quotation from a slew of private letters, including some very intimate notes received by Mr Mandelson from Mr Blair.

It appears likely that Mr Mandelson chose to unburden himself dramatically after his departure from Cabinet just before Christmas. Mr Macintyre's book has not overshot its deadline for nothing. Those close to Mr Mandelson suggest the increased level of co-operation this year was designed to imbue the whole exercise with a cathartic quality.

But how is Mr Blair to feel now that the privacy of his correspondence with Mr Mandelson has been made public? How helpful has Tony's little helper been in revealing that Mr Mandelson was the critical cog in Labour's pre-election wheel and may yet play a similar role in future elections, but that is where he operates best.

Such a view ignores Mr Mandelson's success at the DTI, where civil servants still mourn his departure, and the fact that it would help Mr Blair if his chief adviser was allowed into the Cabinet loop again.

But it is hard to see Mr Mandelson's return being accelerated by this week's revelations. Members of the "Way Back" group of Blairites dedicated to his return were plotting the Mandelson comeback over homely shepherd's pie and supermarket red wine in the weeks before the book came out. They were confident that a more rounded picture of their friend would begin to emerge this year. They were delighted with his more restrained, almost puritan, back-bench profile. But, once again, by thrusting himself forward, Mr Mandelson is not letting his complex character be seen in the best light.

And how, too, is Gordon Brown to feel when he reads the words of Michael Wills, a junior Trade and Industry minister and a part of the Chancellor's inner circle. Mr Wills said of Messrs Brown and Mandelson that they were "like scorpions in a bottle; only one of them will crawl out alive".

The Brown camp is declining to comment on the book. comment@the-times.co.uk

The fact that the Red Lion no longer enjoys as much patronage from Charlie Wheaten has meant the waters between the adversaries remain calmer than they might be.

Moreover, Mr Brown has been making genuine attempts to help Mr Mandelson through a gentle rehabilitation. He has brought him into the planning of the Scottish election campaign and the pair have had several post-resignation meetings to try to reheat their relationship.

But how will the sheer acrimony of their relationship, understandably described by Mr Macintyre as dysfunctional, help them if and when they become ministerial colleagues again? Cartoonists will have a field day as they address the question of how many scorpions can survive around a Cabinet table.

Mr Mandelson continues to have fervent supporters in Downing Street who yearn for his return. Blairite ministers have been discreetly canvassing the Westminster opinion as to the likely impact of an early Mandelson return. The clear implication is that Mr Blair has not ruled out a comeback for his friend before the next general election.

But does the Government need him? Relations between Nos 10 and 11 have been considerably better since his departure. Ministers no longer feel quite the same need to hasten around Whitehall watching their backs with feverish concern.

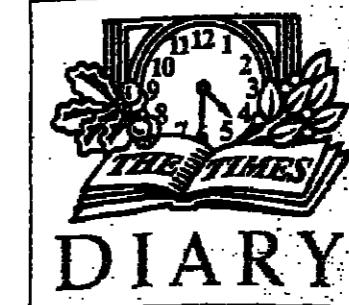
At the Trade and Industry Department Stephen Byers is delivering a broadly Mandelsonian agenda, with the odd tweak here and there, albeit with less of a pro-European agenda. The Government is hardly less popular for his absence, with poll ratings remaining stratospheric.

There is a strain of thought, heretical to his supporters, that the evidence of the past few months shows that Mr Mandelson was the critical cog in Labour's pre-election wheel and may yet play a similar role in future elections, but that is where he operates best.

Whether Mr Milosevic's Operation Horseshoe — the methodical cleansing of Kosovo — predicated the January ultimatum is unclear. What is beyond doubt is that Nato knew of his readiness to visit on the Albanians what Croatia had visited on the Krajina Serbs in 1994-95. After the clearing of Krajina, some 250,000 evicted Serbs descended on Belgrade and demanded Mr Milosevic's head. Having lost Krajina, he was not going to lose Kosovo.

Yet Nato removed the monitors and aid workers from Kosovo. Both groups had served as witnesses and partial restraints on Serb (and Kosovo Liberation Army) atrocities. They were probably the outside world's best hope of impeding Mr Milosevic's grim determination. As it was, far from impeding the disaster, Nato's strategy gave the Serbs a "permissive environment" for the ethnic cleansing.

The cleansing has not been, as Nato spokesmen claim, the worst humanitarian outrage since the Second World War, an exaggeration many Africans and Asians might consider racist. However, it has been brutal and horrific to witness, and holds a peculiar abhorrence to Europeans within the memory of Hitler's war. As of yesterday, more than half the Albanian population of Kosovo has been expelled from the province. The rest have probably been killed or are being held hostage. Mr Milosevic's Operation



Willson wheels

READERS are doubtless impressed with the passion Quentin Willson, a presenter on the BBC's *Top Gear*, displays when condemning the evils of "clocking".

Quentin, the Nissan Micra to Jeremy Clarkson's Rolls-Royce, has been a victim himself of the Arthur Daley practice of rewinding mileometers. But in his case he ended up being convicted of supplying a clocked car before he joined the TV series in 1991.

Willson (left, pictured with Clarkson) emphasises it was ignorance. As a former car dealer himself, he bought the vehicle at auction, was unaware of its true mileage and sold it on to a private buyer, and then came unstuck.

A friend of his at the BBC says: "Quentin wants improved legislation in this area. He wants consumers and the motor industry to be better protected, which is why he writes about it in his column."



A PLUTOCRAT bearing a vague resemblance to Geoffrey Robinson, now free to spend more time with his money, was sighted at The Savoy. Gloomily, the figure reflected: "It is very difficult to buy a decent bottle of wine in London for under £400 these days."

IT IS a rare privilege to read one's own obituary. But as Dave Swarbrick learnt of his demise in *The Daily Telegraph* he had reason to believe that reports of his death had been rather exaggerated.

Jilly, wife of the former Fairport Convention violinist, awoke to an anxious call from a friend. "It came as a sledgehammer," she says. Now our Dave had been a bit pecky (his emphysema had been aggravated by a chest infection) and he had been flown back from Germany to a Coventry hospital; but he had just moved to an ordinary ward and was looking forward to a visit from a physio. Swarbrick, as he is known to intimates, took it well: "It's not the first time I have died in Coventry."

Those undertaken on *The Daily Telegraph* obituary desk (who always look forward to a cold snap) say simply: "We were just miffed, that's all." I, for one, wish Mr Swarbrick a speedy recovery.



DOES Martin Bell want to move to Manhattan? On a beano to Kosovo just before the bombing, the man in white lobbied United Nations sorts about the possibility of a juicy job once his mandate as Tatton's MP runs out. But I hear his audience was distinctly unimpressed with our Mart.

Russians at the UN feel that when he was reporting the Bosnian war he was too matey with the Muslims, who they thought were just as beastly as the Croats and Serbs. The Russians would block his appointment because they feel Bell's stance would be unhelpful.

PRINCIPLES are handy. Luciano Benetton, he of the tasteless adverts and even more alarming jumpers, has refused to pay tax on his Argentine properties. It's not that he's tight, you understand: Mr Benetton is protesting against a recent land tax hike — to a crippling 3 per cent.

CHERIE BOOTH's motivation for joining Labour in 1970 when she was a sweet 16 was purely romantic. She was recruited into the Young Socialists by a Mrs Speight, a teacher at her school (was this ethical, me wonders).

The PM's wife admits: "I joined with friends. I suspect our motives were more social than political as it was a good way to meet boys." Later she learnt that there were better catches to be had in chambers than on those dreary ban the bomb marches.

JASPER GERARD

'On trains, Her Majesty is allowed to smoke in the lavatories, although not cigars or pipes'

Since today is HM the Queen's unofficial birthday, I know that you will want me not only to wish her many happy unofficial returns on all our behalfs, but also to take this opportunity to reply to those countless thousands of you who wrote to me regarding the recent Buckingham Palace statement that the Queen was exempt, "by reason of her special position", from the law requiring her subjects to wear a rear seatbelt. Were there, you clamoured to learn, any other special dispensations which Her Majesty alone enjoyed?

The reason that I have not replied earlier is because, not surprisingly, there turned out to be a huge amount of painstaking research involved, but I'm delighted to tell you that I am now, at last, in a position to publish in the national interest what I hope with all my heart is a usefully

informative — if by no means comprehensive — list.

When not travelling by car, for example, Her Majesty is uniquely entitled to stand upstairs on buses. Should she spit, however, she is liable to the same fine as anyone else, although she would, of course, be given time to pay. On trains, she is allowed to smoke in the lavatories, but not cigars or pipes. She may also lean out of the window without penalty, except on InterCity routes. On the London Underground, she may not go up a down escalator, or vice-versa, but she is allowed to jump over the barrier if she hears her Tube train coming, provided she has a valid ticket for the journey. When flying, she is not permitted to get up before the plane has come to a complete halt, but she is allowed to take care when opening the overhead lockers. She is of course, allowed to lean her

bicycle against shop windows.

Sport, as you might expect, is a somewhat more complex jurisdiction area for Her Majesty. When bowling, she is permitted to deliver more than one bouncer per over — except in one-day matches — but she is nevertheless required to observe current ECB dress-codes and not wear a headscarf when batting or fielding. She can be given out lbw, but never stumped, and in the unfortunate event of a run-out, it is her partner who must surrender his wicket, irrespective of fault. As to football, the Queen is allowed, when playing in goal, to move before a penalty is struck, and would not normally be sent off for bad language, unless violence were involved. In rug-

ger, she does not need to call for a mark or leave the field when bleeding, and in tennis she may abuse her racket as much as she likes. In athletic competition, she is allowed four attempts at the high jump and, when throwing the hammer, to put one foot, but not both, outside the circle.

The Queen is also uniquely permitted to carry a spare baton in the 4 x 400 relay, in case she drops one. In snooker, she is permitted to pot the six remaining colours in any order she chooses. Should her opponent go down during a boxing match, Her Majesty is not required to walk to a neutral corner.

She is allowed to busk on her highway, but not in public houses which do not have a

music licence. In zoos (with the exception of Whipsnade), Her Majesty is permitted to feed the animals.

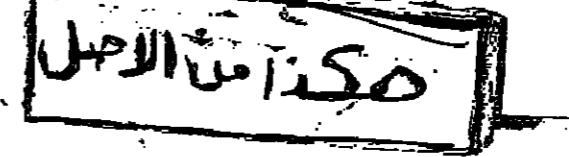
When it comes to shopping, the Queen is allowed to go through the checkout marked "6 items or less" with 7 items or more, but no special dispensation applies in regard to taking the trolley from the premises. In Post Offices, staff may not ask her to go to the next counter, and in petrol stations she does not have to switch off the engine while filling up, though she must take the cigarette out of her mouth. She is allowed to bring her dog into foodshops, but if it wiggles against anything, she is not exempt from prosecution, provided a notice to that effect is prominently displayed.

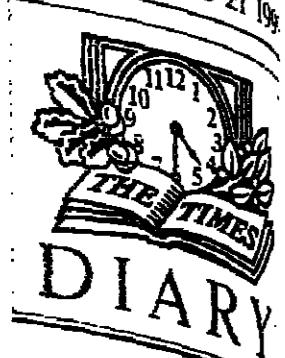
Should, however, a notice be prominently displayed in any

public place stating that bill stickers will be prosecuted, Her Majesty may safely ignore this, just as she may with impunity disregard any injunction to leave these premises as she would wish to find them. She is not, mind, exempt from the law in the matter of spraying graffiti, and if told to use the toothbrush before entering a public swimming-pool, she is legally obliged to comply. She is allowed to drop litter only in the royal parks, but may walk on the grass wherever she takes a fancy to do so.

And finally, when driving — in addition to the seatbelt dispensation with which we began all this — Her Majesty is also allowed to hoot after 11pm, and overtake in the Blackwall Tunnel. If she were to park on a double-yellow line, however, her car would be liable to be towed away, but only by a peer of the realm, with a silken rope.

Alan Coren





Willson wheels

FOOD FOR THE TABLE

Tories need big ideas not small improvements

William Hague spent last night at a dinner to mark the 20th anniversary of Margaret Thatcher's initial election as Prime Minister. He paid a full and appropriate tribute, mindful all the while of the giant gulf between his current prospects and her past achievements. Anniversaries are potent fathers of mythology. It is fashionable in certain Tory circles today to present the Conservative manifesto of 1979 as a seed that contained within it a fully-developed philosophy and programme. In truth, this document was a much more modest text.

That Conservative manifesto did, however, concentrate on the right issues. Mrs Thatcher identified the basic rate of income tax, trade union power, and the dire performance of a state-saturated economy as the central questions. These were, to borrow from Mr Hague's recently adopted vocabulary, the "kitchen table" issues that then absorbed the electorate. The Thatcher Governments proposed radical solutions but imposed their approach step-by-step. This combination of steely principle with subtle practice has ensured her legacy.

Maurice Saatchi and Peter Lilley were both significant figures in the Thatcher years. Lord Saatchi was then known primarily for his powers of presentation. Mr Lilley for his policy initiatives. In a pamphlet published by the Centre for Policy Studies today and in the Rab Butler memorial lecture delivered yesterday these two men have traded places. Lord Saatchi and Dr Peter Warburton put forward the sort of radical plan for the reform of the tax and benefits system that would once have been associated with Mr Lilley. The former Cabinet minister explored the reasons why voters do not trust the Tories to run public services in a public spirited manner and what might be done to rectify this.

Lord Saatchi has made much the more convincing transformation. He argues that the Conservatives need a small set of big ideas that must include a fresh initiative on taxation. This contrasts with the views of the Conservative leader who has convinced himself that his party is seen as "obsessed by economics". According to the Saatchi thesis, voters shifted their support in 1997 because Tony Blair had eased concerns about Labour's competence to protect their incomes and because the Conservatives, after the ERM exit and huge tax increases, had betrayed their supporters. In short, on economics the Tories were not working.

The radical proposals to address this failure rest on a simplification of the tax and benefits system and at this stage, as the authors concede, are not fully developed. Currently small amounts of tax are extracted from a large number of relatively poor people who then need to have their incomes "topped up" by benefits. As well as stopping this, the authors would like to eradicate the vast numbers of tax allowances and reliefs within what is a hideously complicated tax structure. These two ideas

would allow for the merger of several government agencies, thus producing administrative savings that could be redirected towards health and education spending.

This emphasis on tax simplification is right in itself and also one on which the Conservative Party should have already been offering proposals. It has not put forward ideas of consequence in this or any other area. A policy review is taking place under Mr Lilley: but if it were to move more slowly a bunch of flowers and a letter of condolence would be in order.

In his lecture the Tory deputy leader noted that the Tories were not seen as credible custodians of public services because all too often they appeared to have nothing positive to articulate about them. He suggested that his party would not be able to advance enhanced private provision within public-private partnership while its real objective appeared to be an outright privatisation of services for which there was no free market alternative.

Mr Lilley should then have outlined the language and policies that might persuade voters to embrace a different balance between public and private activity. Instead he stressed the limits of market economics with such intensity as to convince his listeners that the private sector was already making the maximum desirable contribution. He claimed that there was "no logical reason why any Conservative would want to restrict provision of health care, education or welfare below what the general public want and are prepared to pay for". Incremental improvement was the best he could offer.

This was less the Rab Butler than the Neville Chamberlain memorial lecture. Mr Lilley asserted that the NHS as currently constituted provided a level of service that works "as well as any in the world". He thought that education policy required devolving power not to parents, headteachers or schools but to teachers. Instead of demanding further welfare reform he seemed proud that the current discredited edifice had been "safe in our hands". If the rest of the Tory policy review looks anything like this farago from the focus groups, there will be little hope for the party at the next election.

Mr Hague has rightly told the Shadow Cabinet that it must concentrate on the issues that matter to ordinary voters. The Conservatives must also associate themselves with substantial solutions to these core problems. They should pursue radical ends by empathetic means not incremental ends by means that are pathetic. Lord Saatchi and Peter Warburton have pointed the Conservative Party in the right direction. Mr Lilley seems, sadly, to prefer a form of intellectual surrender. Mr Hague must obtain a tighter grip on the policy process. There is little point in asking voters to sit around the kitchen table if all the Tories can provide is such gruel.

BEYOND THE BALKANS

Ankara's new Government should beware the call of the wild

Moderate Turkey has swung towards nationalism. In elections this week, 38 million voters favoured the Democratic Left party of Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and also the far-right Nationalist Action party known to history as the Grey Wolves. The result makes it likely that Turkey's next government will be a robust coalition led by these two forces.

There is less to fear from this than meets the eye. The vote marks discontent with the weak political establishment the desire it shows for strong government is positive. Graft and feuds have crippled six Governments since 1995. Economic reform is stalled. Ankara has failed to quell Kurdish nationalist unrest in the southeast. Requests to join the European Union have been snubbed.

This secular protest against Turkey's weakness is less alarming than the religious protest of elections in 1995. A shortlived Islamic Government irritated the army, which saw it as a threat to the secular constitution. The army will be relieved by the Islamists' slump now.

Mr Ecevit has become the symbol of national decisiveness by luck. He took over

just a few weeks before the February capture of Kurdish nationalist Abdullah Öcalan, which prompted a surge of gratitude. But the respect he commands for ordering the invasion of Cyprus in 1974 will make him a stable coalition leader.

There is no immediate cause for concern about Turkey's foreign policy. Chilly relations with Europe could get chillier. But Europeans have only themselves to blame, after shabby treatment of a state whose wish for closer ties deserves respect.

What would cause alarm would be a more aggressive stance towards Turkey's rival, Greece, or bolder policy in its Balkan backyard. Either would worsen regional tension and revive fears of Turkish invasion among Greeks and Serbs. Here, Mr Ecevit should muzzle his probable partners. Nationalist Action's pan-Turkic ideology holds that Turks from the Balkans to China are one nation, led across the world by a legendary grey wolf. In the 1970s, they used violence; now they promise tamer tactics. But snapping at Kurds or regional rivals must be avoided.

It would be dangerous to let the grey wolves have their head.

NOT BY SEA

New Roman ships but no Latin love

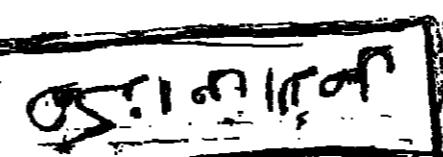
A schoolboy, gazing at a map of the Roman Empire, might deduce that the Romans were skilled sailors, whose power rested on their maritime might. Rome was so conveniently placed for the sea. And it was surely the most awkward place from which to run a land empire: an army had to march half way up Italy before it could even begin a journey anywhere.

The opposite was the case. The Romans were not natural sailors. Evidence of their power is the straight roads which criss-cross Europe, not shipwrecks. Earlier this week, archaeologists near Pisa exhumed eight Roman ships. One might be the first warship ever found on what the Romans had the chutzpah to call "mare nostrum", our sea.

Rome's weakness was most seriously exposed when Carthage sent a fleet against Sicily during the first Punic War. The Romans responded by exploiting and improving others' inventions. Greek ship-builders were employed to build a fleet of

triremes and quinqueremes, the latter patterned after a Carthaginian warship. The Romans then changed naval warfare into something closer to that of a land battle by introducing the *corvus* – a hinged gangplank with a grappling hook. Instead of ramming a ship first, then boarding it later, Roman captains perfected the art of ram-raiding.

These innovations helped Rome to notch up a number of naval victories and secure trade routes to the breadbasket of Egypt. Yet although they boasted of supremacy "terra marique" – on land and sea – the Romans continued to rely on others to crew their boats. Nor, as their poets regularly proved, did they ever love life at sea. Lucretius enjoyed watching, from the safety of land, a ship being tossed about on a stormy sea. He did not relish the suffering of others, merely realising what troubles he had been spared. Romans may have tried to rule the waves, but they never loved being on them.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Labour MP backs war reporters

From Mrs Alice Mahon, MP for Halifax (Labour)

Sir, Congratulations on your leader defending freedom of speech on the bombing of Yugoslavia ("Sword and Pen", April 16). Journalists such as John Simpson (Letters, April 17 and 20), Robert Fisk and Tom Walker, who have the courage to report to us from a country under aerial bombardment, deserve nothing but praise for their efforts, irrespective of whether one agrees with the content of individual reports. Government ministers routinely describe Yugoslav television coverage of the war as hateful propaganda and even threatened at one point to bomb Serb transmitters because, hardly surprisingly, they showed little enthusiasm for Nato bombing their cities to rubble.

Yet the same ministers and officials, who criticise propaganda from the other side, are using anonymous briefings to try to impugn the integrity of the small number of Western journalists providing us with on-the-spot reports of the effects of the bombing being done in our name within Yugoslavia. The reason for this is clear. No objective observer on the spot could fail to note the systematic destruction of the civilian infrastructure by Nato bombers and the fact that virtually the entire Serbian population opposes this – just as much as we would if it were being done to our own country.

It may not be good news to learn that Nato bombs are uniting the Serbs behind Milosevic, or killing civilians every day, but it is certainly relevant when considering the pros and cons of this undeclared and illegal war. In reality, most of our media are overwhelmingly influenced by Nato's own scarcely credible war propaganda. Journalists who try to report objectively, or have the temerity to ask ministers difficult questions, are performing a public service. They should be praised, not vilified.

The British public has the right to know the effect of bombing upon the lives and attitudes of the innocent population of Yugoslavia. If this raises questions about the aims and methods being used in what we were told would be a "humanitarian war", then those legitimate public concerns must be debated not suppressed.

Yours faithfully,
ALICE MAHON,
House of Commons.

April 16.

From Mr F. J. Howard

Sir, I'm sure that during the Second World War Winston Churchill would have loved to have had a German reporter in London regularly telling his countrymen how well the British people were standing up to German bombing raids and how firmly united they were behind their leader.

The only reason John Simpson and his ilk are allowed to remain in Belgrade is because it suits Milosevic to have them there.

When it did not suit in Kosovo, he threw them out.

Yours sincerely,
FRANK HOWARD,
37 Alcester Road, Lickey End,
Bromsgrove B60 1JT.
April 17.

From Mr Neven Lezaic

Sir, You note that as Nato bombing continues it will "pulverise the Yugoslav economy" (leading article, "Clear targets", April 14).

It is hard to imagine how a destroyed and impoverished Serbia will contribute to stability in Europe. Not only is bombing bridges, factories and other non-military targets wrecking what little remains of Yugoslavia's near-bankrupt economy but it is also weakening the democratic opposition to Milosevic. Europe already has one country where lawlessness and anarchy prevail, which is Albania. Nato bombs appear to be creating another.

It is also hard to imagine how more bombing will help make Kosovo a safer place for civilians – Albanian and Serbian – given that the bombing has fuelled extremism on both sides.

Any attempt to use ground troops to "drive [Serb forces] out of Kosovo" would lead to enormous casualties. Not only would Serbia be fighting to defend its sovereignty, but it would also be defending its historic heartland. Western leaders continue to underestimate the Serbs' emotional and spiritual attachment to Kosovo. For better or worse, most Serbs would eat grass before giving up Kosovo.

Yours faithfully,
NEVEN LEZAIC,
43 Shepherds Bush Road, W6 7LU.
April 14.

From Mr Anthony Morris

Sir, As a veteran of combined operations on D-Day, in Burma and French Indo-China (now Vietnam), I agree completely with the gist of Mr Crispin Blunt's letter (April 14), but would go further and suggest that if our Prime Minister had been properly advised, he may have been the only person who could have diverted President Clinton from pressing Nato into the current operation with its increasingly tragic results.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY MORRIS,
Carn Brea,
Castle Drive, St Mawes,
Truro, Cornwall TR2 5DE.
April 17.

Reform of prisons and probation

From Mr Terence Crolley

Sir, The Government must make up its mind about the role of compassion in the criminal justice system. Its muddled thinking is neatly demonstrated by the juxtaposition of your two stories on April 14. The first reports that the Chief Inspector of Prisons would like the Prison Service to be more caring; the second that the Home Secretary wants the Probation Service to be more authoritarian.

Is it any wonder the public is confused?

Yours sincerely,
TERENCE CROLLEY
(Assistant Chief Probation
Officer, 1984-94,
12 Stanley Road,
Maghull, Merseyside L3 5JL.
April 16.

From Mr Stanley Best

Sir, Having read the report by the Chief Inspectors of Prisons and Probation (article, "Lifers spend too long in prison", April 7) I must agree with the authors that the system is in need of urgent reform. The unevenness of treatment mentioned is reflected in other ways as well.

As counsel instructed on behalf of a number of prisoners seeking, from time to time judicial review of Parole Board decisions, I am told of the difficulties solicitors have in obtaining instructions from prisoners. Whereas many prison officers are helpful and compassionate, some are obstructive.

The solicitor, having booked a visit, may be told or arrive to find that there is no record of it and cannot see the prisoner. The visiting room at one prison, I am told, seems to be continually "being painted" so that visits are delayed. No sooner are they started, in a corridor, than visiting time is declared at an end.

The solicitor may be rejected for lack of proof of identity, even when he

or she has visited that prison more than once and provided ample proof. I suspect that this difficulty is not confined to one or two individuals and suggest that the chief inspectors should investigate this blot on the system.

There are no uniform visiting hours or days and arranging, from a distance, to make more than one visit a day is impossible.

Yours faithfully,
STANLEY BEST,
Veritas Chambers,
33 Corn Street,
Bristol BS1 1HT.
April 13.

From the Chair of the Association of Chief Officers of Probation

Sir, Your leader ("On probation" (April 14) is right to identify finding legislative time as the greatest hurdle for reform of probation services but we would dispute your conclusion that probation "is unlikely to make good election fodder".

The probation services' business is serious and large-scale: it involves supervision of over 185,000 offenders, including society's most dangerous, difficult and damaged individuals.

A reorganised probation service with national direction, local administration and better integrated with the other criminal justice services like the police and the courts will be of immeasurable public benefit. The significance of bringing forward legislation cannot be underestimated in terms of reducing crime and meeting the Home Secretary's wish for greater public confidence in a more coherent criminal justice system.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFF DOBSON,
Chair, Association of
Chief Officers of Probation,
4th Floor,
8-9 Grosvenor Place, SW1X 7SH.
April 16.

and the Government to reject this idea, which would hinder the development of digital television and operate against the UK's wider industrial interests.

Yours sincerely,
CHARLES ALLEN,
Chief Executive, Granada Group and
Chairman, GMTV,
MARK BOOTH,
Chief Executive, BSkyB,
STEVEN CAIN,
Chief Executive, Carlton Communications,
GREG CLARKE,
Chief Executive,
Cable and Wireless Communications,
STEPHEN GRABINER,
Chief Executive, ONdigital,
TONY ILLSLEY,
Chief Executive,
Telewest Communications,
FRANK McGETTIGAN,
Director and General Manager, Channel 4,
MALCOLM WALL,
Chief Executive,
United Broadcasting and Entertainment,
c/o Granada Group,
Stormont House,
Cleveland Road, SW1A 1GG.
April 19.

From Mr Barry Webb

Sir, Had scientists and the Whitehall mandarins had the sense to listen to beekeepers, countrymen or organic growers like myself they would have learned, long before they embarked on testing GM crops, that bees fly up to three miles from their hives in search of food.

But bees whose operations overlap those whose territory includes the GM crop will also come into contact with genetically modified pollen and carry it on because both sets will be visiting the same plants: so the range of influence is up to at least six miles. The varroa mite, which has devastated our domesticated honey bees, has leapt in six-mile strides from hive to hive. What makes our scientists think that the same won't have happened to the GM genes?

Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, whom you quote (earlier editions), is right to question the motives of large companies in marketing GM foods in Third World countries.

Yours sincerely,
BARRY WEBB,
3 Coed-y-llyn,
Cardiff CF2 6HR.
April 16.

New D-G for the BBC

From Mr Henry Kemp

Sir, Let us hope that Sir Christopher Bland, as Chairman of the BBC Governors, will vigorously pursue his assertion (letter, April 20) that the political impartiality of the Corporation has always been and will continue to be jealously guarded. Cracks have certainly appeared in this policy over recent years and the appointment of a new Director-General would afford an excellent opportunity to redress any imbalance perceived of late.

We are assured that the best man for the job will be given the post. To have appeared publicly to have been fervently supporting any particular political party must throw doubt on a candidate's bias.

To have given a donation of £50,000 to a party of whatever persuasion can hardly be regarded as a serious qualification for such an influential position.

Yours faithfully,
HENRY S. KEMP,
11 Stevens Lane, Rotherfield Peppard,
Oxfordshire RG9 5RG.
April 20.

Church standards

From Mr David Wicks

Sir, I am encouraged by the Advertising Standards Authority's ruling against a church that claimed a disabled man had been cured by the power of Jesus (report, April 12).

This is not because I have any

doubt about the evidence of healing

and Resurrection in the Bible but

because I look forward to similar

scrutiny by the ASA of the claims

made by political parties in their various manifestos.

Surprise leaders in the science rankings

Honours are spread widely in the latest league tables, says John O'Leary

The eight tables below, covering science and technology, complete the new subject rankings compiled this year. Seven universities head the tables, illustrating the breadth of excellence in the British higher education system. Neither Oxford nor Cambridge tops more than one table, a feat achieved only by Nottingham University.

As with the tables for arts and social sciences, published yesterday, the rankings are produced by combining official teaching and research assessments with average entry qualifications. The teaching quality rating is weighted 2.5, research 1.5 and A-level points one.

Though engineering assessments are now virtually complete, mathematics and some science subjects, including physics, are still to be fully assessed in England.

The seven science and engineering tables published last year have changed little because the teaching and research assessments will not be updated until after the millennium. They do show greater domination by Oxford and Cambridge, although Bath and East Anglia remain leaders in their fields.

Oxford and Cambridge are locked together at the head of the geology table, with top ratings for both teaching and research. Plymouth represents the new universities in the top ten, while Newcastle is the nearest challenger to the ancient universities.

Chemistry sees the same dead heat for top place: Oxford and Cam-

bridge are again the only universities with maximum points for research. Imperial College London and Bristol fill the next positions.

Cambridge heads two other tables, although both are narrow victories. In computing, the top six universities all have excellent ratings for teaching and a five-star grade for research, but Cambridge's unusually high entrance qualifications win the day. Warwick is second and York third. The same applies in geography, where the top four are all rated excellent for teaching and have the best possible score for research. Bristol, Durham and University College London are Cambridge's closest rivals.

East Anglia has an even narrower lead in the environmental science table, squeezing out Reading with fractionally better A-level entrance grades. Both have maximum scores for teaching and research.

The two previous engineering tables are also closely contested. Bath remains just ahead of Sheffield because of a five-star research grade, with both universities rated excellent for teaching. Imperial College London is top for chemical engineering for the same reason, although Cambridge achieved the better rating for teaching quality.

■ Warwick University was omitted from Monday's applications table. A 12 per cent increase this year should put it in fourth place. The decline in applications to King's College London was exaggerated in the compilation of the statistics by admissions officials, and should have been 4.4 per cent.



Rebecca Holland, award-winning chemistry student from Bristol

IN THE GUIDE TOMORROW

Oxford and Cambridge — what admissions tutors are looking for, and how to choose between colleges

EIGHT NEW SUBJECT TABLES FOR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

MATERIALS SCIENCE

18 London Guildhall 59.30
19 Manchester Metro 59.05
20 Brunel 56.19

■ Competition was intense for the leading places. Eight universities had five-star ratings for research, and they did not include Imperial College London, the only institution to win maximum points for teaching quality. Oxford's all-round performance, with the highest entry qualifications, the maximum score for research and 23 out of 24 for teaching, won the day. Cambridge was only a fraction behind.

The ranking is dominated by the traditional universities, with only Sheffield, Hallam, London, Guildhall and Manchester Metropolitan making the top 20 from the former polytechnics. The subject has not been assessed in Scotland, but Swansea carries the flag for Wales in ninth place.

Assessors found that employment prospects were "excellent", although drop-out rates were high in some universities. The main problem they identified was the recruitment of well-qualified applicants. Only five universities' entrants had the equivalent of three Cs at A level. Teaching standards and the general quality of classroom activities were considered high.

1 Oxford 95.83
2 Cambridge 94.79
3 Imperial 93.35
4 Sheffield 84.47
5 Swansea 80.71
6 Liverpool 80.00
7 Manchester 77.78
8 UMIST 75.35
9 Birmingham 74.44
10 Nottingham 72.12
11 Loughborough 69.92
12 Bath 69.54
13 Surrey 69.16
14 Exeter 67.66
15 Queen Mary Coll 65.28
16 Leeds 64.47
17 Sheffield Hallam 62.22

FOOD SCIENCE

■ Nottingham is a comfortable winner in the first ranking of food science, which contains only a dozen universities. Three quarters of the institutions offering the subject are

former polytechnics, but the table is dominated by four traditional universities.

Only two universities reached the top of the research assessment ladder, and Nottingham entered far more academics than Leeds, the other five-star performer. Nottingham's entrants averaged a modest 15 points at A level (fewer than two Cs and a D), but its 23 points out of 24 were top for teaching quality.

Successful students' job prospects are good, according to the overview published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

1 Nottingham 95.40
2 Reading 84.58
3 Leeds 75.93
4 Queens Belfast 71.21
5 Oxford Brookes 64.03
6 North London 55.21
7 Huddersfield 50.23
8 Teesside 46.80
9 Bournemouth 46.65
10 Lincs & Hum'side 46.17
11 Manchester Metro 42.54
12 South Bank 41.21

■ Points for teaching quality were hard won in civil engineering. While three universities reached the top rank of the last research assessment, 22 out of 24 was the most that was awarded for teaching in England and no Scottish university was rated excellent.

Only Cardiff and Swansea reached the top grade for teaching. Swansea also had a five-star research rating, but low entry grades relegated it to sixth, while Cardiff has to settle for fourth.

Bristol's all-round performance secured top place, with Imperial College London, another of the five-star research departments, second. Newcastle was the other top-rated research university, but

its teaching and A-level scores pulled it down to eleventh. Greenwich is the only new university to feature in the top 20.

1 Bristol 93.13
2 Imperial 90.91
3 UCL 90.69
4 Cardiff 89.84
5 Nottingham 89.11
6 Swansea 85.51
7 Bath 84.94
8 Sheffield 80.94
9 Queens Belfast 79.96
10 Edinburgh 79.65
11 Newcastle 79.11
12 Liverpool 78.82
13 Surrey 78.66
14 UMIST 77.97
15 Loughborough 76.42
16 Heriot-Watt 74.38
17 Birmingham 72.31
18 Dundee 71.96
19 Greenwich 71.28
20 Southampton 71.24

■ Though not one of the two universities with perfect teaching quality grades, Imperial College's high entrance scores and top rating for research secured top place in this specialised engineering field.

The ranking includes some universities that chose to offer their mechanical engineering degrees assessed in this category, but Imperial's four-year MSc courses are mainly aeronautical. Second-placed Bath has aeronautical, manufacturing and mechanical engineering degrees. Nottingham, third, and Kingston, fifteenth, are the two top-rated universities for teaching quality.

Aston University is yet to be inspected and Scottish universities do not have a separate teaching assessment for the subjects. But the overview for England reported a 95 per cent completion rate, with most graduates securing relevant

employment. However, the assessors found that a "significant proportion" of entrants need extra mathematics coaching to cope with their course. They also saw scope for more industrial involvement in many programmes.

1 Imperial 88.44
2 Bath 87.69
3 Nottingham 86.41
4 UMIST 83.59
5 Loughborough 82.07
6 UCL 80.12
7 Bristol 79.21
8 Southampton 78.59
9 Cardiff 75.30
10 Cranfield 75.00
11 Queens Belfast 74.58
12 Liverpool 69.20
13 Manchester 65.45
14 Birmingham 62.15
15 Kingston 60.38
16 Brunel 59.69
17 Central England 55.95
18 London, Kings 55.20
19 Queen Mary Coll 54.33
20 Anglia 54.23

■ Sheffield, Southampton and Edinburgh are the star players for Electrical & Electronic Engineering — each achieving perfect scores for teaching and research in what is a highly competitive field.

Imperial, Bristol, York, Birmingham, Queens, Strathclyde, Essex, Cardiff, Heriot-Watt and Hull all gain maximum results for their teaching. UCL and Surrey excel in research.

Across the board, standards are high, with none of the 20 universities that offer the course falling below an overall score of 70 and the top seven each achieving more than 90.

Disturbingly, completion rates are a problem on several courses, in some cases falling to 40 per cent. Many of the assessors' reports express concern at relatively high failure rates in the first two years of undergraduate programmes — a statistic that they attribute to difficulties in acquiring the requisite mathematical skills.

However, of those who do stay the course, six months after graduation about 80 per cent have entered employment or embarked on further studies and employers express a high level of satisfaction with the skills of graduates.

1 Sheffield 98.08
2 Southampton 96.18
3 Edinburgh 91.47
4 UCL 91.44
5 Imperial 91.18
6 Bristol 91.09
7 Surrey 90.83
8 York 87.16
9 Birmingham 85.75
10 Queens Belfast 85.71

Let the workplace come to the class

Last week David Blunkett urged all universities to demand that their students gain work experience ahead of graduation. The proposal is intended to placate employers who have long complained that graduates lack workplace aptitude, from basic communication skills to operating a photocopier.

Students would be wise to heed Mr Blunkett's call. A recent survey by the Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick found that half the graduates surveyed reported that relevant work experience was a crucial factor in enabling them to find employment. Sixty per cent of arts and humanities, modern languages and natural sciences graduates attributed problems finding work to lack of practical experience.

Some universities are ahead of Mr Blunkett. Nottingham in effect invites workplaces into the university to encourage the emergence of entrepreneurs. Every year 100 of its science and technology students work in teams to devise business strategies for an imaginary biotechnology project that is raising in the cash. Teaching is provided by people who deal with such companies for a living — business executives, patent lawyers and accountancy firms. Marks are awarded by a team of assessors from inside and outside the university.

Professor John Peberdy came up with the idea for the course in 1991. "I realised there was a gap between science as we taught it at university and how it becomes real in terms of products in the marketplace," he explains. "We aim to enhance students' employability — teaching them to be resourceful, self-reliant, innovative and imaginative."

Other universities send their students out into the working world. De Montfort University's business studies course has been arranging 12-month industrial placements for undergraduates for more than 20 years, which generates heavy demand from canny sixth-formers. At any one time, 150 students are out on placement, earning on average, between £7,000 and £10,000. So successful is the scheme that

Innovative schemes are being devised on and off campus to give real-world experience to students, reports Hannah Betts

companies such as Marks & Spencer have integrated De Montfort's sandwich year within their own strategies of graduate recruitment.

Penny Robb, the placement officer, says: "Before they go off, the students are pretty green around the gills. By the time they return, they have matured."

The Department for Education and Employment is also sponsoring projects at selected universities around England. The North East Work Experience Project is the responsibility of Newcastle and Northumbria universities, Manchester and UMIST run the Work Experience Bank. Business Bridge is a scheme shared between Liverpool's universities, while a project called Improving the Quality of Work Experience in Higher Education finds its home at the University of Wolverhampton. The universities of Plymouth and Exeter have conspired to produce the Jewels scheme, which provides advice on everything from sandwich courses to burger bar jobs.

Even if students are not fortunate enough to be able to benefit from one of these schemes, there are other routes they can follow.

The Shell Technology Enterprise Programme (Step) is open to second-year undergraduates at every university. The scheme was started 12 years ago and 1,500 students now pass through its programme of eight weeks with a small to medium-size enterprise every year. Pay is £13 a week, tax-free.

Twenty-one-year-old Rebecca Holland is a chemistry finalist at Bristol who won last year's award

for Step's most enterprising student.

Ms Holland had previously spent vacations working in a shoe shop, but she decided last summer to do something more demanding. The Step programme took her to Shipley Europe Ltd, where she discovered that there was a cheaper, more environmentally sensitive alternative to using chromic acid for plating metal into plastic, which will lead to savings of up to £30,000 for the company.

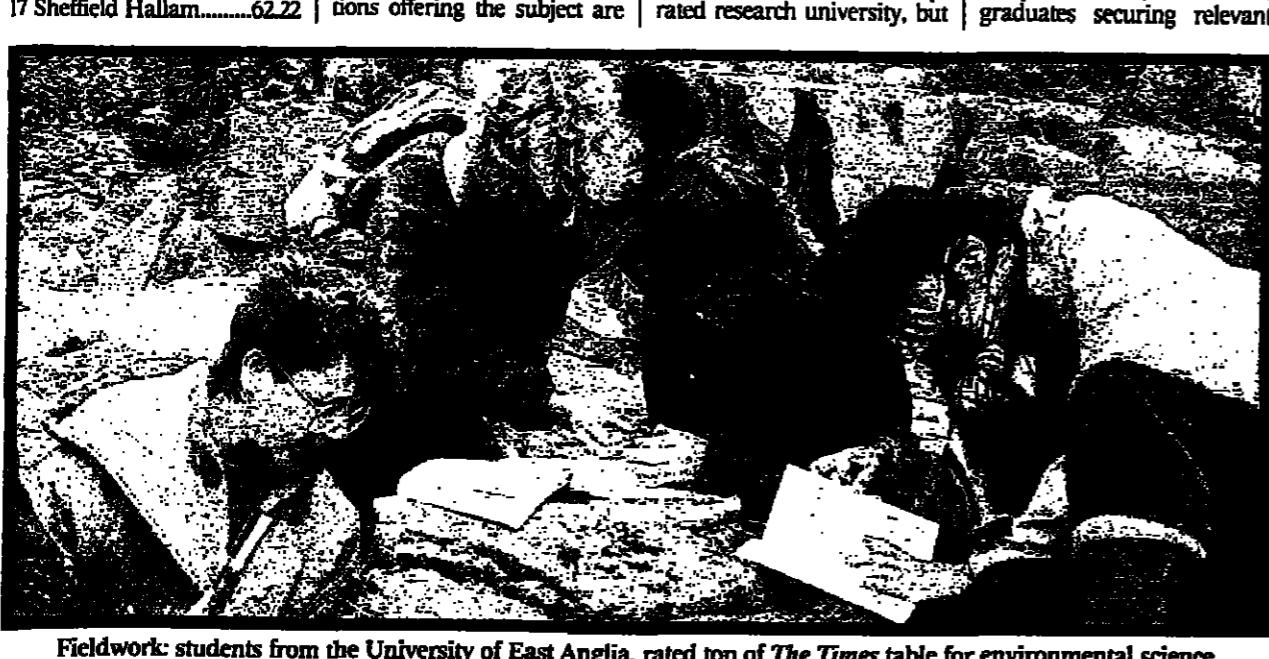
"One of the best things about working was that people respected your point of view," she said. "At university you're never in a position to know as much as your tutors. But in the workplace, you may know more than the company does. One graduate can make a real impact, which does amazing things for your confidence."

Ninety per cent of Step students find employment soon after graduating. Ms Holland is no exception and will join Nestle's very competitive graduate programme after her finals.

"I was so much more confident in my approach to gaining employment," she recalls. "I was no longer in awe of workplaces." When interviewers asked her to give an example of a situation in which she had improved the cost-effectiveness of a company, she was able to give an answer that far outstripped the usual "when I ran the college sports team" responses.

Ms Holland would recommend the Step scheme and others like it to all students — particularly because she found it enjoyable. "I needed to earn money over the summer," she said, "and I wanted to increase my employability. But I had no idea how much fun it would turn out to be."

■ Working Out? Graduates' early experiences of the labour market, by *Kate Purcell, Jane Pitcher and Clare Simm*, price £40, is available from the Higher Education Careers Services Unit, Prospects Book, Booth St East, Manchester M13 9EP. Step hotline 01623-469 030; or www.shell-step.org.uk



Fieldwork: students from the University of East Anglia, rated top of The Times table for environmental science

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CHANGING TIMES

الدليل على الاتصال

NEWS

Nato committed to moral crusade

■ Tony Blair committed Nato to a moral crusade against President Milosevic, insisting that the bombing would continue until the Yugoslav leader had been forced to "step down".

Later it was made clear that the Prime Minister was not announcing a new Nato objective — the overthrow of Mr Milosevic — but he said the defeat of the Yugoslav leader was a moral imperative. On a visit to Nato headquarters Mr Blair said there would be no deals or compromises. Page 1, 47

Britain hands over atrocity intelligence

■ Britain is to hand over all the intelligence it has acquired about atrocities in Kosovo to Judge Louise Arbour, prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague. Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said it would be the "largest release of intelligence material" authorised by Britain. Page 1

Hatchet buried

Baroness Thatcher sought to end the longest running feud in British politics by publicly lavishing praise on Sir Edward Heath at a dinner in London. The former Prime Ministers have hardly exchanged a word since 1975 when Lady Thatcher succeeded Sir Edward as Tory leader. Page 1

School shooting

Two men in black trench coats and masks walked into a Washington high school and opened fire indiscriminately. Several children were carried from Columbine High School covered in blood but amid chaotic scenes it was uncertain if anybody had been killed. Page 1

Thatcher abandoned

William Hague tried to face down a Shadow Cabinet revolt by staking his authority on the abandonment of Thatcherite ideals of reforming the health, education and welfare systems. Page 16

Early child

The skeleton of a four-year-old child who died 24,500 years ago reveals that Neanderthals and man interbred, says an American palaeontologist. Page 17

Night raiders

Raiding the biscuit tin in the middle of the night is not greed but a symptom of a dangerous illness, Albert Stunkard, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, told a London conference. "Night eating syndrome" should be classified with anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Page 3

A glimpse of the might of Rome

British and Italian scholars hailed the discovery of eight almost perfectly preserved Ancient Roman ships buried in the mud of what was once the harbour at Pisa as "an astonishing step back into the past" and a "rare insight into Rome as a maritime and trading power". One wooden ship, with an elongated prow, is thought to have had a military purpose. Page 11



The Queen autographs a celadon teapot in Seoul yesterday at the start of her four-day visit to South Korea. Page 9

BUSINESS

Crisis over: The International Monetary Fund declared an end to the worst phase of world economic crisis that began almost two years ago in Asia and then spread to Russia and Latin America. Page 29

Shares dive: Shares took a breath-taking nosedive as dealers followed heavy overnight selling on Wall Street. Page 29

Row at the top: France's acquisitive LVMH has gained control of the Chateau d'Yquem vineyard after settling a long legal quarrel with the property's manager, Count Alexandre de Lur Saluces. Page 29

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 195.5 to 6319.8. The pound rose 0.44 cents to \$1.6161 but fell 0.09% against the euro to 65.94p. The index rose to 104.0 from 103.9. Page 32

Simon Barnes: Peter Schmeichel's form this season is even more admirable for his indifferent form at the start of the season. Page 52

Rugby union: Leicester and Northampton, the country's leading clubs, are confident that better times are ahead, even though they will make substantial financial losses this season. Page 50

Simon Barnes: Peter Schmeichel's form this season is even more admirable for his indifferent form at the start of the season. Page 52

Seauy Semelle: Underwear, muddy, groping: English National Opera's new excursion into Handel is notching if not diverting. Page 43

King's goes Russian: Shedding its usual Anglican repertoire, the choir of King's College, Cambridge brought an absolutely splendid performance of Rachmaninov's Vespers to London. Page 43

SPORT

Football: Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke, the strikers who have carried Manchester United to the European Cup semi-final, know they must recapture their best form to take the team past the obstacle of Juventus tonight. Pages 56, 52

Tennis: Despite winning the first set, Tim Henman contrived to lose to Fernando Meligeni in the Monte-Carlo Open. Page 54

Rugby union: Leicester and Northampton, the country's leading clubs, are confident that better times are ahead, even though they will make substantial financial losses this season. Page 50

Simon Barnes: Peter Schmeichel's form this season is even more admirable for his indifferent form at the start of the season. Page 52

Off the wall: Kurt Schwitters, pioneer of European avant-garde art between the wars, ended his life working feverishly on a wall mural for a Cumbrian barn. Now the wall has gone on display. Page 41

Fings revived: A boisterous new production of *Fings Ain't Wot They Used t'Be* pays tribute to the songwriter Lionel Bart, who died this month. Page 42

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FEATURES

Easy money: How to make savings in the garden and the financial implications of marriage. Page 19

Gene generosity: A \$45 million project researching DNA building blocks could provide insights into diseases. Page 20

No small matter: Children are the innocent victims of a crumbling relationship and they must come first in any divorce battle. Page 21

HOMES

Safe as houses: Investors frustrated by low savings rates are putting their money into properties for rent. Page 38

UNIVERSITY GUIDE

Building blocks: What is on offer in science and engineering and work experience advice. Page 26

FOCUS

Pride: The Queen's Awards for Export, Technological and Environmental Achievement. Pages 44-47

THE PAPERS

India's divisive ethnic and regional politics have produced one political crisis after another. Now these tensions have caused the collapse of the Hindu nationalist Government. The beneficiary could be the troubled Congress Party, which has governed India for most of the last 15 years — *The New York Times* Page 25

RADIO & TV

Preview: Manchester United's battle to get to the European Cup final (ITV, 7.30) **Review:** All animal life is here — in North London says Joe Joseph of BBC1's new series, *A Life of Grime*.... Pages 54-55

OPINION

Food for the table: Mr Hague has rightly told the Shadow Cabinet that it must concentrate on the issues that really matter to ordinary voters. The Conservatives should, though, associate themselves with substantial solutions to core problems.... Page 23

Beyond the Balkans

Turkey has swung towards nationalism. There is less to fear from this than meets the eye. Page 23

Not by sea

The Romans were not natural sailors. Evidence of their power is the straight roads, not shipwrecks. They may have tried to rule the waves but they never loved being on them. Page 23

COLUMNS

SIMON JENKINS
There are three Kosovan wars. Nato has lost the first, the second is still being fought, and the third has not properly begun. Since conflict takes a mounting toll on reason, we must struggle to keep these wars distinct. Page 22

ROLAND WATSON

It takes a rare mix of the brilliant and the flawed, the spiky and the exotic to elbow aside the Balkans and demand a leading slot on the war-dominated news agenda. But one Labour politician has it.... Page 22

ALAN COREN

When not travelling by car, for example, Her Majesty is uniquely entitled to stand upstairs on buses. Should she spit, however, she is liable to the same fine as anyone else, although she would, of course, be given time to pay.... Page 22

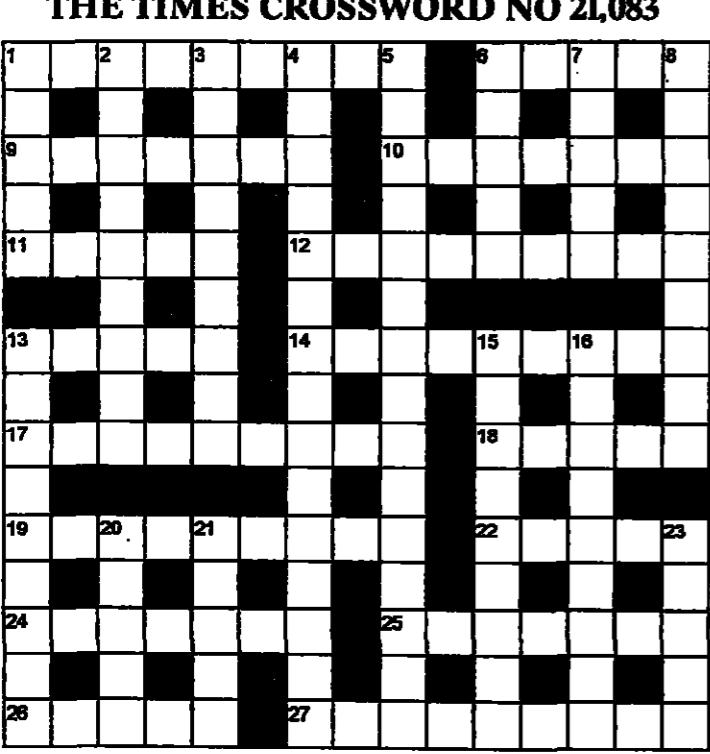
OBITUARIES

Dame Kathleen Raven, Chief Nursing Officer; **Adolfo Bioy Casares,** writer; **Norman Williams,** lawyer and philatelist. Page 25

OBITUARIES

War reporting: prison reform; modified crops; digital TV; BBC: "lost" war memorial. Page 23

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SB hopes for brittle bone treatment dashed

By PAUL DURMAN

SIDE effect problems have forced SmithKline Beecham to abandon work on an osteoporosis drug that was one of its most promising compounds after spending hundreds of millions of pounds on its development.

The setback with idoxifene, which was intended to prevent the brittle bone disease, will increase the importance placed on Avandia, the potential diabetes blockbuster, which American regulators will review tomorrow. The success of Avandia, which if approved could be launched in June, is seen as the cornerstone of SB's future growth, and even of the company's continued independence.

Jan Leschly, chief executive, said SB had spent "hundreds of millions" on taking idoxifene through to phase III trials but a recent review concluded that the drug would not be effective. Some forecasts had suggested the drug could generate annual sales of almost £500 million a year. SB is continuing to develop the compound to treat breast cancer.

The group reported strong first-quarter results, with pre-tax profits 16 per cent ahead at £510 million from sales 11 per cent higher at £2.1 billion. The growth came largely from Seroxat/Paxil, the anti-depressant that is winning market share from Eli Lilly's Prozac, from the antibiotic Augmentin, whose sales rose 19 per cent to £297 million, and from Nicorette and other anti-smoking products, where sales grew by two-thirds to £112 million.

SB has also had to stop work on developing Famvir to treat hepatitis B because of poor trial results. Mr Leschly said SB still had six drugs in phase III development, including Aritlo for emphysema, the potent antibiotic Factive and Bexxar for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Mr Leschly dismissed persistent suggestions that he intends to retire early — a move seen as encouraging the likelihood of SB entering into a merger.

He said the company was on course to meet its forecast for this year of underlying earnings growth of 13 per cent. After adjusting for currency fluctuations, first-quarter earnings per share rose by exactly this amount.

Clinical Laboratories and Diversified Pharmaceutical Services, the two American businesses recently sold for \$2 billion (£1.25 billion), contributed quarterly profits of only £11 million, although this was a sharp improvement on last year.

The success with smoking cessation products enabled the consumer healthcare division to increase profits by 27 per cent to £89 million.

Tempus, page 32

NET PROFITS

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Bill Wood, left, managing director of Cosalt, and Neil Carrick, financial director, wearing survival clothing made by the supplier of workwear and safety equipment to unveil flat profits of £2.3 million in its half year to February 28. Cosalt blamed "challenging" trading conditions. Earnings per share fell 4 per cent, to 12.8p. The interim payout rises to 4.75p (4.5p).

Bank chiefs fear cost of three-way merger

FROM PAUL ARMSTRONG IN PARIS

THE French banking industry is fearing for its future amid the growing prospect that the hostile three-way merger between Banque Paribas, Société Générale and Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP) could end in stalemate.

Banks' senior executives acknowledge that the bitter battle may fail to produce a clear winner, instead leaving the financiers linked by a string of minority shareholdings.

They say this would undermine the strength of the industry and they have no idea how France's banking regulators would solve the problem.

"That is a way of destroying the French banking system," Daniel Bonton, the chairman

SocGen and Paribas have agreed to merge, but the deal has been complicated by a Fr208 billion (£20.9 billion) hostile takeover bid for both banks by BNP.

SocGen and Paribas are re-

jecting BNP's offer on the grounds that a hostile, three-way merger has never been achieved in the banking sector and would not work in this case.

M Bonton claimed yesterday that a three-way merger would see the trio's combined revenue from retail banking fall by at least 5 per cent and possibly much more.

He argued that the revenue drop, which would be caused by customers taking some of their business to banks unconnected to the group, would occur immediately.

But M Bonton said it would take significantly longer to bring down costs to the same extent.

SocGen and Paribas also rejected suggestions made yesterday by Claude Bébér, a BNP director, who claimed that senior executives of the two take-over targets had told him in February that they might be interested in forging closer ties with a retail bank such as BNP.

André Levy-Lang, Paribas chairman, said the possibility of a three-way merger involving BNP was first raised by AXA, the French insurance group chaired by M Bébér. M Bébér is also a director of SocGen and Paribas.

M Bébér told M Bébér that they "had other things to worry about than BNP".



Tempus, page 32

No recession for us, says St Ives

By ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

MILES EMLEY, the chairman of magazine and direct mail printer St Ives, said yesterday that the much feared UK recession had not hit — at least not in its markets.

St Ives is closely linked with many parts of the economy, printing books — including Maeve Binchy bestsellers — a range of consumer and professional magazines, direct mailings, and documentation for mergers and acquisitions. Yesterday Mr Emley said: "This was the recession that never was."

But he added: "The growth

rate has slowed and, to use the jargon, there is a soft landing." His comments came as St Ives posted a 13 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £27.3 million for the six months to 29 January. Earnings per share rose to 18.04p from 16.23p and the half-time dividend is 0.5p ahead of 4.25p.

St Ives shares were the best performing of the top 350 London stocks yesterday rising more than 10 per cent to 530.4p, on a day of sharply falling markets.

Miles Emley: 'soft landing'

HSBC's star team of five makes £8m

BY JASON NISSE

TWO employees of HSBC Holdings, the banking group, earned more than £2 million last year according to the company's annual report.

One picked up a package worth between £2.4 million and £2.5 million and another received between £2.1 million and £2.2 million.

They were among a team of five traders who earned a total of £8.18 million between them. The five — not named — almost certainly work at HSBC Investment Bank in London.

The worst-paid of the five earned the same as the best-

paid director of HSBC, the chairman of the group's Hongkong Bank subsidiary, John Strickland, who retired at the end of last year, received a total package worth £934,000.

The report also points out that senior directors and managers are in line for a £3.03 million windfall from the group's restricted share plan. This scheme was opposed by many shareholders when it was introduced in 1996 because it was too generous to its recipients.

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As the IMF sounded the all-clear yesterday, investors apparently dived for the air raid shelters. In Washington, they may have decided that global meltdown is not about to happen but in London, this welcome reassurance was greeted with a near-200 point fall in the FTSE.

Could this apparently churlish response have actually been the result of a close reading of the IMF forecasts and a realisation that, while worldwide recession may have been avoided, share prices have run way out of line of growth prospects? Unlikely. What we saw was just a little bout of profit-taking rather than any dawning of long-term common sense.

That Dixon was one of the major victims does not amount to a realisation that its sudden transformation into an Internet stock is to be charitable, still unproven. The shares still trade at almost treble their low point for the year. No wonder some were tempted to crystallise the extraordinary gains they have made.

COLT Telecom, even after yesterday's hefty dip, remains in the stratosphere, and profitless.

At some stage, stock markets on both sides of the Atlantic will have to reassess valuations in relation to earnings, but that day has not yet arrived. The IMF takes the view that the threat of a stock market crash in the US is now abating, but a significant adjustment is inevitable.

For the UK, the IMF predicts only 0.7 per cent growth in the

current year, lower than the Treasury's own forecast of between 1 and 1.5 per cent. That FTSE companies are now selling on an average of more than 28 times earnings indicates the incredibly optimistic view being pursued by some investors.

Looked at starkly, the figures are enough to drive one into sympathising with poor Tony Dye and his colleagues at PDM but we all know where their determinedly rational approach has left them: losing clients at a rapid rate.

Mr Dye insists on looking at the real world rather than the virtual one. John Monks, the trade union leader, is peering through the same tinted spectacles and yesterday he was once more warning of the two nations into which the UK is rapidly dividing: what is manufactured in Morocco for Marks & Spencer is no longer manufactured in Britain.

There are now regions of the country where the only new jobs being created appear to be in call centres built to service the needs of those in the wealthier parts of the country. And the chances are that as the virtual world takes hold, and more and more business is done over the Internet, the

call centres will become as redundant as many of those who now staff them once were.

Lower interest rates will not revive ship-building in Britain nor restore the textile industry, yet the calls for further cuts go on.

Yesterday John Edmonds denounced the members of the Monetary Policy Committee as "dilettante" and intimated that a trade unionist on the MPC could change things. Wishful thinking.

Even gnomes slam withholding tax

There is honour among financial centres after all. Zurich, the supposed beneficiary of the European Commission's loopy proposals to impose withholding tax on interest

turns out to be aghast at the idea. Being neutral means trying not to upset more powerful nations such as Germany too much. The last thing the Swiss want to do, therefore, is to upset all their neighbours and key trad-

COMMENTARY by our City Editor

ing partners at once. But that is exactly what they would do if they vacuumed up the custom not just of eurobond investors but of EU savers as a whole to avoid withholding tax.

A high-level Swiss financial delegation, which came to the City yesterday to promote its high-tech integrated trading system to eurobond traders, instead spent much of its time disclaiming any desire to host the fleeing billions, although the Swiss would probably be the Brussels line rather than challenge it, less some future referendum favouring joining the EU.

If that sounds good news for promoters of the tax, it isn't. The Swiss have their own 35 per cent withholding tax but exempt foreign holders of essentially foreign stocks. Georg Krayer, president of the Association of Swiss Bankers, points out that the issue has only resurfaced because savings immediately fled to Luxembourg when Germany and The Netherlands last tried all-purpose national withholding taxes.

At the weekend meeting of EU finance ministers in Dresden, the UK appeared to be playing dangerously with some compromise formula to save the London eurobond trade. Even Mario Monti, the retiring EU Tax Commissioner, says that this will not work. He has not explained that it would tax small investors but exempt the rich, a formula that even the most federal-minded social democrat might find hard to swallow. There are yet more compelling reasons for London to say no, such as higher taxes for even the smallest pension saver.

Luxembourg, unlike panting Blairite Britain, is at the centre of Europe. Its burghers know how to do things. At Dresden, Luxembourg called for harmonisation (or banning) of inward investment incentives to be brought in with the withholding tax. It was a cunning move. This project is being led by our own Dawn Primarolo. It has counted 200 new rules and rising. No effective recommendations are likely before November, long after tax-hungry

manding as they ought to be. But the first-quarter figures show the company well on course to deliver its promised 13 per cent increase in earnings, which will be enough to quell most investors' potential criticisms.

Mr Leschly's pay package does, however, put other details into perspective. It is evidence of a UK company handing our US-style remuneration. As Glaxo has tacitly noted, other British companies that class themselves as global players will have to move towards the SB levels, if not so far or so fast.

As we become conditioned to the new norms, a mere couple of million pounds for an HSBC banker will seem perfectly reasonable reward for a year's toil in the financial markets.

Standard Life's Guy Jubb is going to find the attitude adjustment hard, but it has to come.

Colossus of erodes

TOMORROW Bernard Arnault's battle for Gucci lands back in the Dutch courts. M Arnault's acquisitions are rarely straightforward affairs. Gucci has tried to expedite matters by saying that an offer of \$88 a share would be acceptable, but that is far too simple a solution. A few investors take the opportunity to voice their qualms over the pay deal. Standard Life, that active guardian of corporate governance, has made clear its suspicion that the targets SB is setting to trigger bonuses are not as de-

Debenhams in fashion with £79.4m

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

TERRY GREEN, chief executive of Debenhams, said the department store group has been taking market share in women's and men's clothing from Marks & Spencer, its beleaguered high street rival.

But Mr Green gave warning of a likely fightback. "I imagine that Marks & Spencer must be making some recovery from its position pre-Christmas. You could say it is making it tougher, not easier," he said.

M&S was forced to issue a profit warning after terrible trading over the key Christmas period. Other clothing retailers have run into difficulties because of the downturn in spending and a large overhang of stock. Mr Green said yesterday: "It's a tough environment out there. It is still volatile, but we think it's improving."

In the six months to February 27, total sales rose 2 per cent to £785.2 million. While like-for-like sales were down 1.9 per cent, costs also fell by a similar amount. Interim pre-tax profits rose 3 per cent to

£79.4 million. Earnings per share were up 2.2 per cent to 14.1p and the company is paying an interim dividend of 4.1p (3.9p).

The gross margin increased by 0.2 percentage points to an estimated 42.1 per cent in the first half. The company said margins were substantially up again in the first seven weeks of the second half. Like-for-like sales, said the company, are down by a similar amount to the first half in the period.

Four new stores were opened in the first half, at Leeds Briggate, Brighton, Hanley and the Trafford Centre in Manchester. There are now 90 stores in the UK. The new programme, announced at the time of Debenhams' demerger from the Burton Group last year, will see it increase to more than 100 UK stores by 2003.

Franchise stores have been opened in Kuwait and Dubai, and another is set to open in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in October 2000.

Tempo, page 32

Cut-price stores see sales surge

BY FRASER NELSON

TJ HUGHES, which runs 23 cut-price department stores across the UK, said it has lifted underlying sales by 11.6 per cent for the first ten weeks of 1999 as it wins market share from its mid-market rivals.

The company, whose wares include cheap Calvin Klein underwear, said many of its shoppers have deserted traditional high street leaders after finding them too expensive.

Pre-tax profits jumped to £5.1 million (£3 million) for the year to January 31 and earnings were 13.9p (10.2p) a share. A final dividend of 2.76p makes a 3.89p (3.37p) total.



Audit office attacks sale by British Coal

THE National Audit Office (NAO) will today tell Parliament that British Coal's sale of CIN Management (CINMan), a subsidiary that advised and managed its pension funds, was needlessly protracted and expensive (Saeed Shah writes).

The watchdog says that disagreement between the Government, British Coal, CINMan and trustees of the pension schemes meant that the sale, completed in 1996, took a

Anglo in bid for Reunion

BY CARL MORTISHED

ANGLO AMERICAN Corporation, the South African mining and industrial conglomerate, is building up its position in zinc with a recommended £37 million bid for Reunion Mining, which controls Skorpion, a big zinc mining project in Namibia in which Anglo has a minority share.

The bid is being made by Minoro, Anglo's affiliate, which is to be integrated fully into Anglo when the South African group moves its primary stock exchange listing to London next month.

Anglo yesterday said that current weakness in base metal prices provide a good opportunity to develop its base metals business. The acquisition of Reunion's 60 per cent interest in Skorpion would give Anglo 100 per cent of the mine, which has ore reserves of 19.5 million tonnes of zinc.

Minoro is offering 88p per Reunion share and has undertaken to accept from Reunion directors and others that exceed 50 per cent of Reunion.

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Tim Lamb, the chief executive of the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB), is an optimist. Then again he has to be. If you were attempting the Herculean task of restoring English cricket to the fortunes it enjoyed when the likes of May, Hutton and Illingworth led teams that could triumph over all our former colonies — and all you have is a team that contrives to lose to Zimbabwe — you would have to be positive.

However, to trumpet that the English game will make a £50 million profit from the cricket World Cup, which starts next month, is a little over exuberant. It may look like a good figure, but it does not bear close examination.

For a start, the £50 million figure, which actually refers to the ECB's income not profit, is disappointing when compared with the target set by Lamb and the ECB's chairman, Lord MacLaurin, of Knebworth. The ECB had hoped to clear something in the range of £35 million to £40 million to take advantage of an event that is un-

Lamb's scoring is wide of the mark

likely to be back on these shores for at least two decades.

The ECB's plan went like this. It would raise about £25 million from broadcasting revenues — mainly television — and £15 million from sponsorship. That £40 million would be split between the ECB and the International Cricket Council — the overall ruling body of cricket — on a 50-50 basis.

In addition, the ECB would also get money from gate receipts at the matches and from merchandising. The former was budgeted to bring in £1 million, the latter, with the help of Caprice, a US model famous for wearing Wonderbras, was expected to raise £1 million.

This would have left a gross income to the ECB of £32 million. The costs of staging the event — hiring venues, transporting teams to the UK and to the grounds and catering, though not the wages for

team members, which comes out of the ICC pool and from the local cricket boards — is estimated to be £18 million. This would have left a profit of about £14 million if all had gone to plan.

But it has not. The broadcast income has come in at about £23.5 million. The UK television revenue was fine — the ECB struck an £8 million deal with BSkyB, which allowed some matches to be shown on the BBC. However, an expected bonanza from selling the rights to the Indian sub-continent was not quite as lucrative as had been hoped for, leaving a £1.5 million shortfall.

Sponsorship was also disappointing. The ECB has wanted eight global partners and four official suppliers, paying a total of £15 million for the pleasure. It secured only four global partners — NatWest, Pepsi, Vodafone and Emir-

BUSINESS

By Jason Nisse

ates Airlines — but was able to sign six official suppliers. The total raised from sponsorship was £10.5 million.

Michael Browning, the ECB's tournament organiser, blames a number of factors for why the sponsorship figure fell short. One is the Asian financial crisis. The ECB had hoped to sign at least one Japanese company as a global partner

— in the end it had to make do with Honda as a supplier. Secondly, it started too late. The ECB began its search for sponsors two years ago — Browning believes that this was 12 months tardy as cricket is not always at the top of people's sponsorship wishlist.

Thirdly, the ECB had planned to use "virtual sponsorship" — an electronic system in which logos show up on television screens in some countries rather than others. This would be used to sell a sponsorship deal probably to Wills, the cigarette-maker, which operates mainly in India and Pakistan. However, after a couple of technical tests, the plan was dropped.

The ECB is putting a brave face on this £4.5 million shortfall, and sponsorship experts think that the problem was not that the ECB did poorly attracting sponsors, but that it had set its sights too high.

Nigel Currie of Craigie Taylor, which advises Vodafone on sponsorship, says that the ECB probably thought that as there was no football World Cup or Olympics this year, it would be able to capitalise on the absence of a big sporting event to win sponsorship. However, it forgot that the rugby union World Cup takes place in the UK this autumn and probably lost a sponsor or two because of this.

The rugby factor has also hindered attempts by some of the teams to secure sponsors. As I write there is no news on a West Indies beaker and if you fancy sponsoring the first Scottish team in the cricket World Cup, Gavin Hastings, the former Scottish rugby captain, awaits your call.

The big shame is that the ECB has not signed up a big consumer brand — like Snickers or McDonald's — which would help to pro-

mote the event through its own promotions," says Mr Currie. Vodafone is doing this to a certain extent and Pepsi might be expected to do something, but it seems most of its promotions are aimed at India and Pakistan, where it is in a bitter battle with Coke.

The final part of the jigsaw is ticket sales. Browning is confident about hitting the £11 million target, having already sold £9 million worth of tickets a month before the event even starts.

All in all this adds up to a gross income for the ECB of £29 million and a profit of about £11 million — a tidy sum but not quite Mr Lamb's £30 million. Of course, the World Cup has meant that there will be two test matches fewer this year than last, a loss of about £5 million in potential profits. So the ECB will end up about £6 million better off than it would have been if it had not staged the World Cup.

As they say at Tesco, Lord MacLaurin's old stomping ground, "every little helps".

jason.nisse@the-times.co.uk

North-South divide masks reality of divergent economies

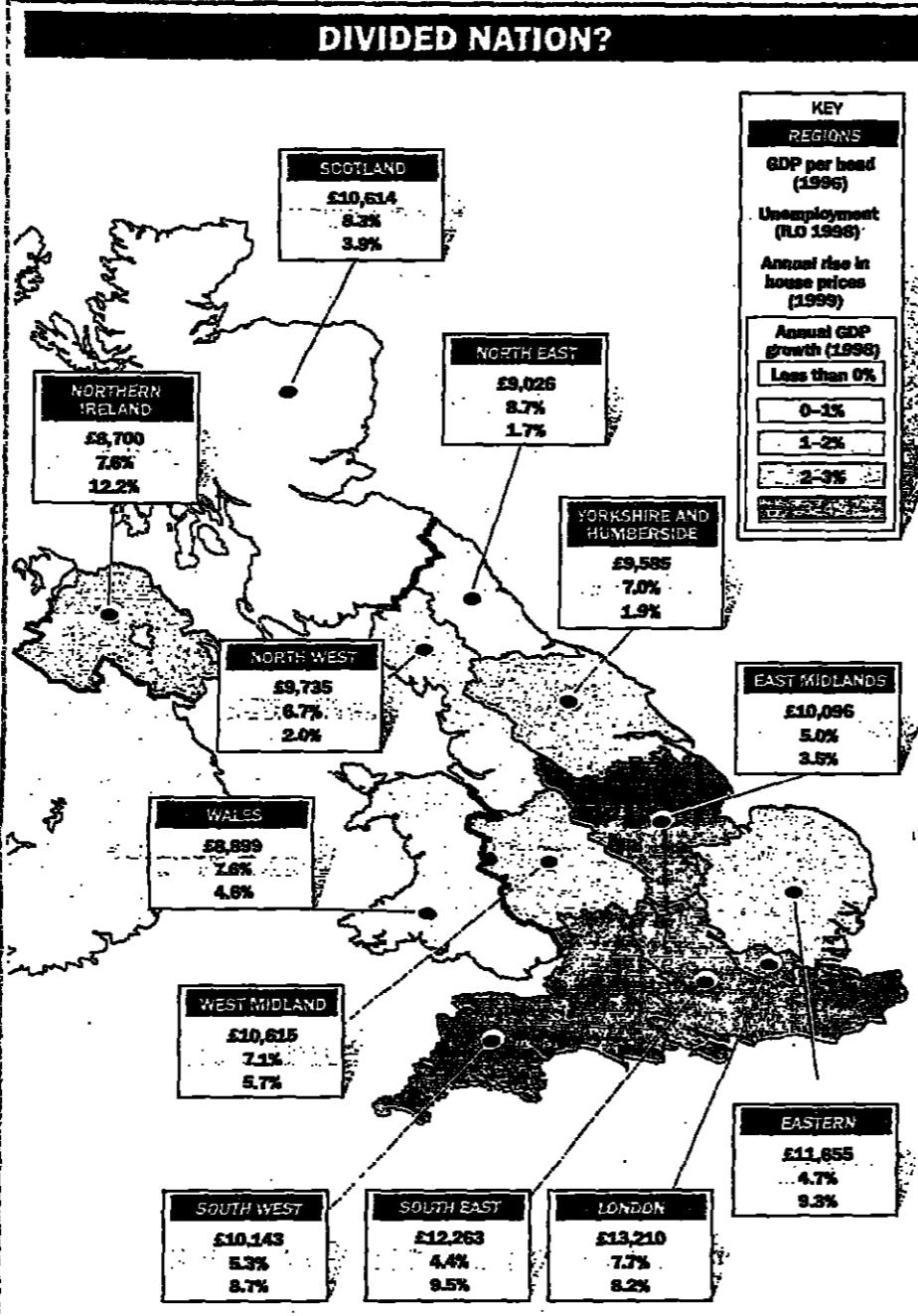
Alasdair Murray examines the increasing clamour for a regional approach

When Eddie George inadvertently suggested that unemployment in the North was a "price worth paying" for keeping inflation in check, he appeared to confirm the region's worst prejudices about the southernness inherent in Threadneedle Street. A string of indignant manufacturers, union leaders and politicians queued up to berate the Governor of the Bank of England for suggesting that national economic policy was dictated by the excesses of the housing market in the South East. The understandable suspicion was that centralising economic policymaking in London inevitably leads to suffering in the regions.

The regional dimension to economic policymaking is set to become a staple of political debate with the creation of the Regional Development Agencies in England and the imminent arrival of the Scottish and Welsh parliaments. For the first time in years, the Bank and the Treasury are facing concerted opposition to national economic policy.

Superficially, the traditional prejudices about the North-South divide seem well grounded. The two worst-performing regional economies, Scotland and the North East, suffer the typical unholy economic trinity of a large manufacturing sector, high unemployment and low GDP per capita. In London, the South East and South West, this position is reversed, with these regions posting the strongest growth rates last year and increasing their economic lead over the rest of the country.

Yet a closer examination of the data suggests that this regional divergence is not quite so straightforward. Scotland's underperformance — and Business Strategies is predicting it will remain mired in recession this year — is out of proportion



to the size of its manufacturing sector. Scotland's manufacturing sector constitutes 23 per cent of its economy — far higher than London's 9 per cent — but below the level of manufacturing in six other regions which have all performed better. Scotland seems to be suffering because of the mix in its manufacturing — a high proportion of textiles and computing hardware — which has had an unexpectedly negative impact on its service sector.

The North East has a typical

ly large manufacturing sector acting as an overall drag on its economy, but it also recorded the country's highest financial and business services sector growth rate at 12.7 per cent last year. The East Midlands, however, seems to have overcome the handicap of a large manufacturing sector — about 28 per cent of the economy — to record a healthy 3.2 per cent growth rate last year. The region has a large concentration of engineers — such as Rolls-Royce in Derby — which

seemed to have fared better during the manufacturing downturn, while cities such as Nottingham and Northampton have profited from London services overspill.

Another traditional manufacturing centre, Yorkshire and Humberside, also recorded a solid growth rate of 2.6 per cent last year. Its overall performance, however, concealed a marked divergence between the increasingly services-oriented Leeds area and York's successful pursuit of

high-tech start-ups compared with the still depressed regions of South Yorkshire. The unspoken assumption, however, remains that the manufacturing north needs to be freed from the straitjacket of southern rates. Scotland, in particular, has a strong case for arguing that it has a European-style economy, including at 55 per cent the lowest level of home ownership in Britain, which needs the lower rates of the single currency area.

Yet the complex reality of the regional economies suggests finding an "ideal" regional interest rate is likely to prove no less difficult than setting a single national rate. Nor is it clear that the difference in regional inflation rates justify different rates. While house price increases which range from 1.7 per cent last year in the North East to 12.2 per cent in post-treaty Northern Ireland, seem to support the case, estimates of the divergence in inflation rates are far less stark. Business Strategies suggests headline inflation last year was in a relatively tight range between 2.2 per cent in Scotland and 3.5 per cent in the eastern region — hardly a simple boom and bust divide.

Nor is it certain that lower rates will prove the necessary cure. As the British Chambers of Commerce noted last week, the problem for manufacturers is not the cost of borrowing but the pound, which remains stubbornly high despite the Bank's rate-cutting spree. More fundamentally, it is questionable whether short-term monetary policies can reverse the long-term trends within the economy. An examination of the demographic trends suggests there is a close relationship between population growth, low manufacturing output and high economic growth. This is the legacy of the last time the South outperformed the rest of the country heavily, during the 1980s boom. Higher growth rates and better job prospects inevitably attracted workers, especially the mobile young, to move south. These migrants have now settled and had families, boosting population growth and ensuring a healthy young/old mix that suits the service sector. This in turn boosts growth and the circle begins over again.

Reversing this trend is akin to trying to turn a supertanker.

of-the-way places. The Enemy Within details all those organisations suspected of pro-EU tendencies that should be boycotted.

It must be quite an achievement, knowingly steering clear of the products and services of, among others, BP, BT, Unilever, Unigate, Northern Foods and pretty well all of the British drinks industry.

But British Aerospace? "Difficult to boycott, but bombard with mail, their chief executive treats the British electoral process with contempt". Indeed; it must be a wrench, sending those Hawk trainers back on a point of principle.

never seen it before. My picture shows how the development would have looked but for the subsequent attentions of the Luftwaffe and the 1950s school of architecture.

It was found by Peter Bennett, a London antiques dealer, at a house clearance auction. He now hopes to sell it to Land Securities or Hammerson, the two property companies redeveloping the site.

Bennett says that the painting, the work of Joseph Stradler, an engraver, dates to 1812 and is valued at more than £25,000. It is the only known depiction of the scene. The church is St Martin's, which survives to this day and will take pride of place in the new development.

MARTIN WALLER

citydiary@the-times.co.uk

Sea sick

JOHN PRESCOTT is being sued by a former employer for £1.4 million. Not personally, unfortunately, but as Secretary of State for the Environment.

According to the trade publication *Contract Journal*, a writ from P&O Property Holdings alleges that the Department of the Environment, as it used to be, failed to maintain Elizabeth House. Trial is set for December.

This is an office block at London's Waterloo occupied by the DoE from 1971 to 1997 that

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Unfortunately the brewery is being closed, which has caused much anguish locally and thrown a large number of Sunderland supporters out of work.

The image merchants were sent off to find another logo for the team. The favourite is a swallow, predictably enough. But someone has pointed out that swallows dive — plus this is exactly what the club, newly promoted to the Premier League, did straight back into the first division the last time it reached such heights.

AN EXTRAORDINARY circular reaches me from one of those anti-European groupies breeding like flies in out-



Dive bomb
A TRICKY problem for Sunderland Football Club. The team is sponsored by Swallow, formerly known as Vaux, and across the strip is the word "Lampoons", to promote the company's "smooth brew" ale. This is made locally at Vaux Brewery in Sunderland.

"Ignore it — our computer must be on the blink!"

Regions suffer from statistical breakdown

There is still a significant stumbling block to conducting a sensible debate about Britain's regional economies — the absence of comprehensive and reliable statistics. This country's centralising tendencies seem to include the Office for National Statistics, meaning that while a mass of national economic statistics are produced on a monthly basis, there is rarely a corresponding regional breakdown.

In this sense, the experience of London provides hope. It is often forgotten that only two decades ago, London was still the country's prime manufacturing city. The transition to a services-led economy has proved painful and London still suffers from higher than average unemployment. But after years of losing population, the capital is enjoying an influx of fresh immigrants attracted by good job prospects and strong cultural and leisure services. There are signs that cities such as Leeds, Manchester, Glasgow and Bristol are beginning to foster similar conditions. It is in this subtle process, rather than the quick-fix simplicities of monetary policy, where the future of the regional economies lie.

Only the unemployment data is supplied on a regional basis monthly. This data is sufficiently detailed that unemployment can even be measured by parliamentary constituency, ensuring that MPs can keep abreast of the job prospects of their constituents. By contrast, the most recent breakdown of GDP figures dates from 1996, while the regional home-ownership figures are positively prehistoric, hailing from the last great housing downturn in 1993.

Individual private organisations have moved to try to fill the gap. Both Halifax and Nationwide supply monthly house-price data, although they use a slightly different regional breakdown to the Government's standard divisions. Business Strategies produces more timely and reliable estimates of regional GDP performance. The economics group even has a stab at local inflation rates, although it admits its own figures — derived from survey evidence rather than real prices — can be no more than a best estimate.

An increasingly devolved nation requires improved regional data. But just who is going to meet the considerable extra costs of providing reliable statistics will prove an interesting battle of wills between the regions and the centre.

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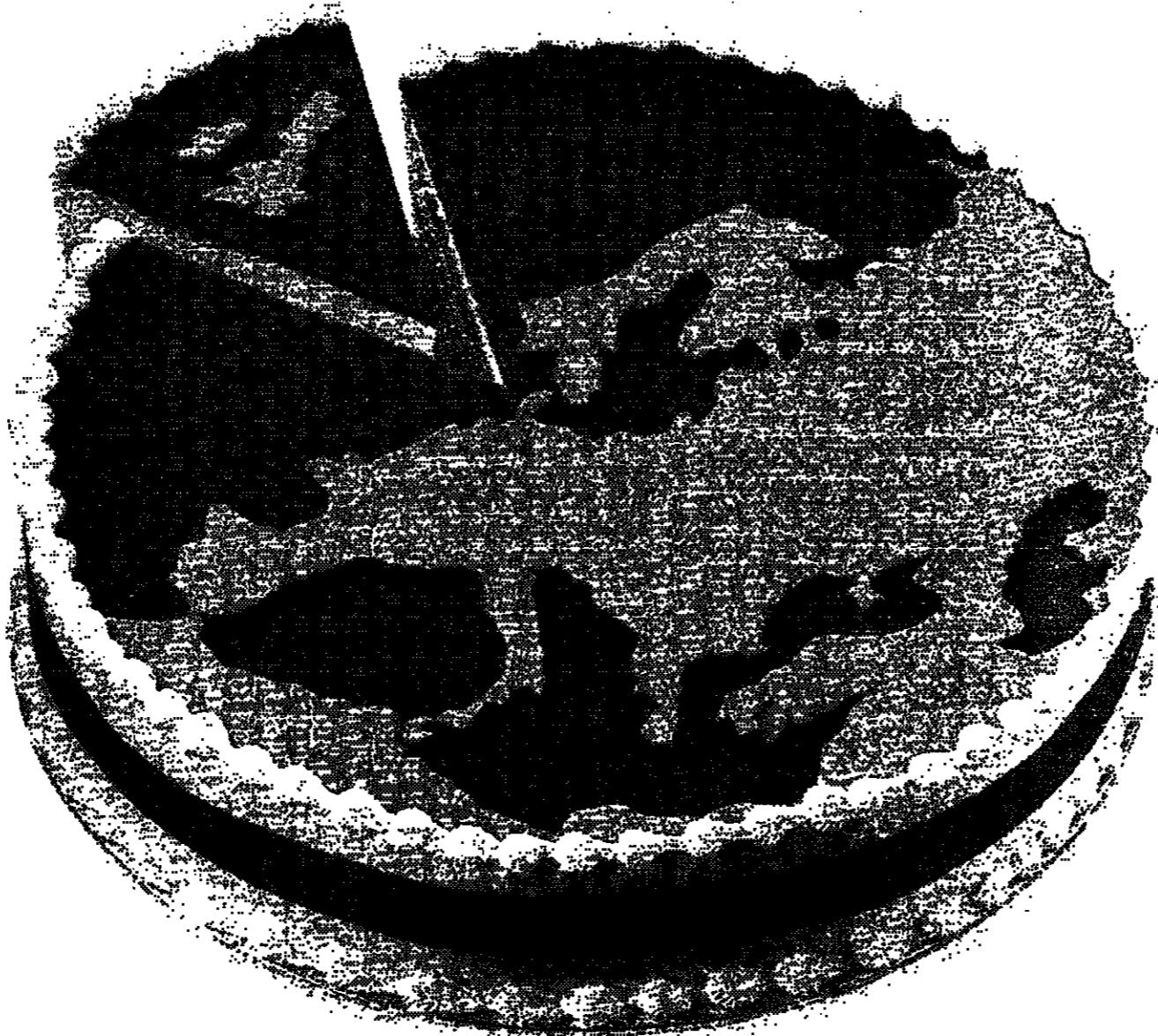
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Building your business abroad

How you could be a landlord

Instead of waiting for savings rates to go up, some investors are buying to let. Rachel Kelly reports on the costs, profits and pitfalls of letting

THE COSTS

Property: Two-bedroom flat, Fulham, London SW6
Purchased price: £240,000
Commission: £14,400
Stamp Duty: £1,200
Net yields: 5.5 per cent
Gross yield: 6.7 per cent
before funding: 12.12 per cent
Loan interest: 6.5 per cent
after funding: 10.63 per cent
Leas to value: 80 per cent
Interest on loan: £12,480
ACQUISITION COSTS:
Professional fees: £240,000
Stamp duty: £1,200
Conveyancing: £500
VAT: £17,561.02
Local property tax: £100
Land agent fees: £100
Structural survey: £60
VAT: £17,561.679
Refurbishment costs: £5,000
Furnishing: £10,000
Total costs: £259,034
INCOME:
Gross rent: £20,800
Void allowances: £1,200
Net rent: £19,600
Annual expenses: £2,500
Insurance (contents): £200
General maintenance: £200
Utility costs: £75
Contract fees (inc VAT): £88
Letting fees: £10,1907
VAT: £17,561.679
Management fees: 5 per cent
VAT: £17,561.679
Total expenditure: £25,934
Spares available for finance:
£15,743
Interest on loan: £12,480
Annual net profit: £6,693
£5,500

If you are serious about playing the property market and making money, it may not be enough just to speculate on your own property: why not buy a second house or flat, too?

"Buy-to-let" investments have boomed as the volatility of world stock markets in recent months has led many to search for investments that offer better returns. Here are the numbers, simply put. Such investments offer the chance of an annual rental income of more than 7 per cent, and a 5 per cent annual rise in the value of the property. Such returns beat most of the best investments in shares.

Of course, the detailed figures are more complicated and reflect all the hidden extras of buying a property. Experts say that the Association of Residential Agents (Arla) and the banks that offer buy-to-let mortgages are not warning investors about the costs of letting property. Nick Jopling, from Allsop & Co, says: "There should be a health warning on buy-to-let mortgages to make investors aware of issues such as voids (empty homes), management fees, maintenance costs and insurance. All this adds up to about 25 per cent of the investor's gross yield." [See box on costs.]

Gross yields vary from 3 to 10 per cent, depending on the location and type of property. Net returns are 5 to 7 per cent, enough to fund an interest-only mortgage of up to 80 per cent of the value of the property because interest rates are so low. Rates as low as 5.5 per cent are now available, a far cry from 8.5 per cent just a year ago, and banks and building societies are clamouring to lend on such properties.

In less than three years, banks and building societies have lent more than £1.7 billion through buy-

to-let schemes. Only last week, the Halifax Building Society launched a scheme through its specialist mortgage lender HMSL. So, too, did Paragon Mortgages.

George Humphries runs the buy-to-let department of Hamptons International. "The total returns from buy-to-let are between 9 and 11 per cent, significantly higher than alternative investments. Housing seems a sensible option, and not just because of falling interest rates. The ratio between house prices and earnings now stands at about 3.3 per cent – in other words, the price of a house is roughly three times the annual salary. This should produce a sustainable relationship between house prices and average annual earnings."

Of course, such investments must be made with caution. As Malcolm Harrison, from Arla, says: "Buyers must be prudent in their choice of area and property. Don't base preference on personal taste, and it is important to contact a letting agent to discover if the area has a healthy letting market and what kind of properties are in demand."

The London Housing Federation estimates that 100,000 new homes are needed within London, which is good news if you have bought a home to let out. A shortage of afford-

CASE STUDY

James Barnes outside the three-bedroom, former council home he bought to let in Wandsworth, southwest London



able properties must eventually push prices and rental values up. The problem here is that agents have reported an oversupply of properties at the top end of the rental market in Central London but not enough in other parts of the city. Investors need to find those ar-

eas where there are shortages of rental property. Andrew Reeves, a letting agent, says that the London suburbs are a better bet for buy-to-let, or even further out to places such as Bromley and Beckenham, which have good communications with the West End and the City.

High returns depend on a buoyant letting market, which is threatened if too many jump on the buy-to-let bandwagon. And ultimately, the ease of obtaining buy-to-let mortgages, may saturate the market and force letting values down. Grab your moment.

Who pays the price of an empty property

People living near Britain's 750,000 empty homes are plagued by arson, vandalism, theft and drug abuse. The National Week of Action, organised by The Empty Homes Agency, started on Monday with publication of a survey which highlighted their distress.

These properties can also seriously reduce the value of the homes around them. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors says 10 per cent of the value of a house can be lost. Ashley Horsley, chief executive of the agency, says: "Empty homes are the real neighbours from hell. In the North of England the numbers constitute a ghost town of the size of Sheffield. London's is the same size as the entire housing stock of Haringey."

"All but two of the 42 councils we surveyed have received regular complaints about the problems of empty homes. Crime apart, there are environmental and health and safety problems, among them vermin, fly-tipping and dangerous structures. Empty homes can also be a death trap for children."

This week the agency will highlight the good use to which some of the organisations and individuals have put these houses, including examples from Bury, Leeds, Manchester and Sefton.

Mr Horsley says: "Through sale or rent they can be a valuable source of income to their owners, and they can provide an alternative to B&B accommodation for the homeless. Putting them to use can lift neighbourhoods."

The action week started on Merseyside with the launch of a scheme by the Liverpool Housing Trust, which has worked with the city council and a private developer to transform a council estate. At the end of this week in Birmingham, the agency will name organisations and individuals across England which have contributed to keeping homes empty. Mr Horsley says: "It is a scandal that so many houses stand unused at a time when 100,000 are homeless each year."

BEN WAKEHAM

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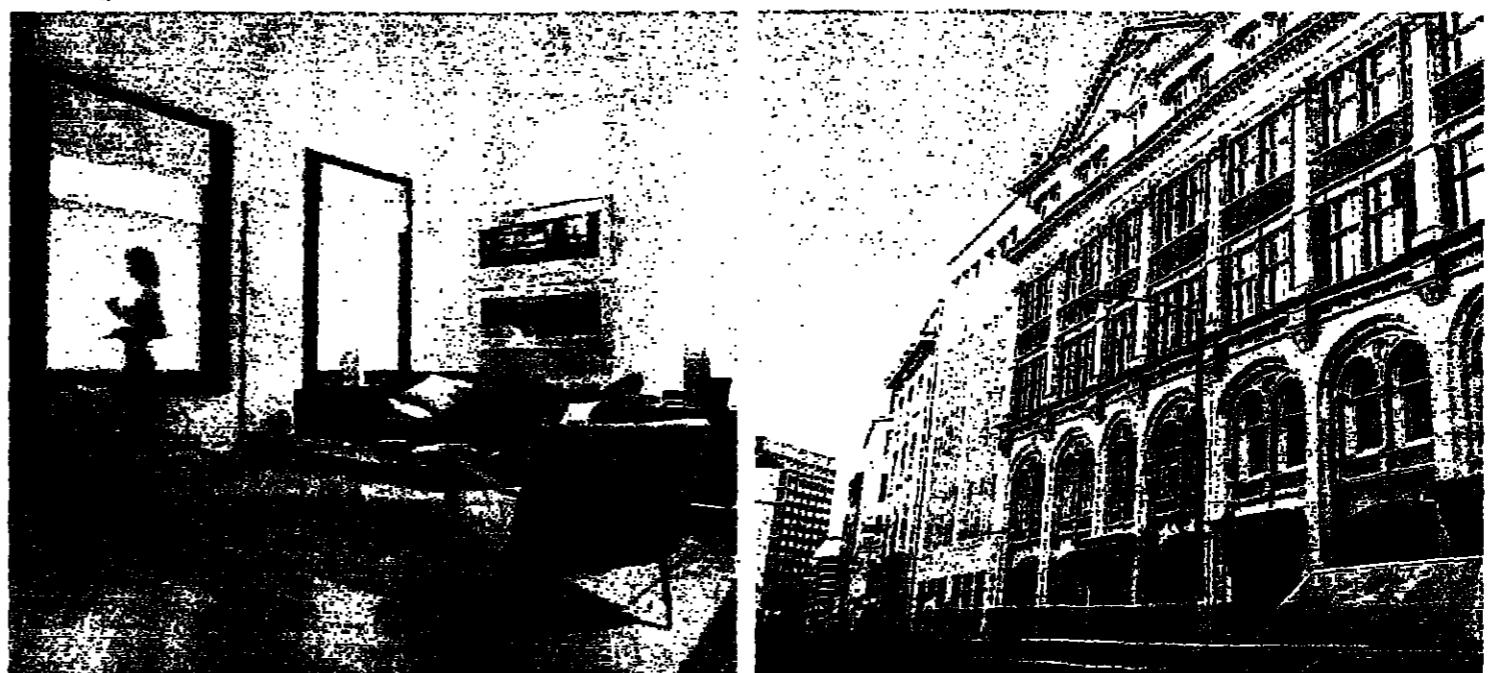
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NEW HOMES

THEATRE

Lionel Bart's
Fings gets a
timely revival

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THE TIMES

ARTS

OPERA

Saucy *Semele*
— the ENO's
new Handel

PAGE 43



VISUAL ART: A Cumbrian barn was the unlikely setting for Kurt Schwitters' final creation. Richard Cork reports

Pioneer's last wall and testament

Partially paralysed after two strokes, Kurt Schwitters was in no condition to embark on a big project in 1947. A lung haemorrhage warned him in July that his body should not be over-taxed. But the 60-year-old exile refused to give up.

With heroic obstinacy he started to transform the interior of a stone-walled barn in the Lake District. Sleeping most of each day in order to gain strength for a three-hour bout of intensive work, he stubbornly declared that the barn would become "the largest sculpture I have ever built".

Schwitters' tenacity may have been reinforced by the urge to compensate for the fate of his two previous building-sized works. The earliest, spreading through the rooms of a house in his native Hanover, had preoccupied him for 14 years during the interwar period. He called it the *Merzbau*, and surviving photographs suggest that its proliferating chambers were indeed his masterpiece. But the house was obliterated in a 1943 air raid, and Schwitters was further mortified by his inability to complete a second *Merzbau* in a studio in Norway. He had moved there in 1937, after the Nazis branded him as a "degenerate" artist and removed his work from museums. But the invasion of Norway in 1940 forced him to escape to England, leaving the unfinished *Merzbau* which children accidentally destroyed when playing with matches.

Schwitters found life arduous in wartime London. He settled there after a 17-month interment mostly at a camp on the Isle of Man. A few English artists and critics recognised his stature as a European master of collage and a restless pioneer of multi-media experimentation. But when he moved to Ambleside in 1945 the ailing artist could easily have despaired of ever working on a grand scale again.

With admirable resilience, however, he refused to give up. Schwitters was used to deploying the humblest of scavenged materials, and even the most rudimentary "building" could ignite his imagination. So when he befriended the landscape architect Harry Pierce, who lived in the nearby village of Elterwater, Schwitters became excited by the prospect of renting a barn on Pierce's land. A well-timed \$1,000 award from the Museum of Modern Art in New York enabled him to pay the annual rent of £52, and he started a construction on the barn's end wall.

Schwitters saw it as a three-year commitment to turn the whole interior into a cave-like work "better and more logical than anything I have ever done before". Within a few months, though, he became desperately weak. Travelling from Ambleside each day to labour in the winter chill of the barn, where water soon began

to stream across the floor, he died in January 1948.

The *Merzbau*, as Schwitters called it, remained unfinished and grew increasingly vulnerable to damp and decay. By 1963 a drastic decision was arrived at: in order to preserve the construction on the end wall, it would be removed from the barn. Schwitters would have been horrified by the idea. He had conceived the wall as part of an elaborate environment. The barn, in turn, inhabited a Great Langdale valley that had undoubtedly nourished him as he built up the organic forms on the relief.

But nobody seemed capable of protecting it, and none of the institutions approached by Pierce would take responsibility.

Even the Tate declined to purchase it. The apathy seemed to bear out Schwitters' suspicion that "English people don't understand art at all".

Only Newcastle University, armed with some money for a sculpture commission, took advantage of the opportunity.

Acting on the advice of Richard Hamilton, then a lecturer at Newcastle, it undertook the hazardous and costly task of moving the relief to the university's Hatton Gallery in 1965.

The relief's safety was assured, and it has been preserved there ever since.

But what meaning could this isolated wall have, wrenched from the Lakeland context that brought it into being?

For many years the Hatton made scant effort to display this extraordinary fragment sensitively.

Only now has a special exhibition been mounted, in collaboration with the new Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, to celebrate the *Merzbau* and show some of Schwitters' other work.

The show ranges from early work in a Cubo-Expressionist idiom to later examples of his deft, inventive ability to use everyday detritus. The principal emphasis, though, rests on his 1940s work. He painted a lot in those difficult years, executing some naturalistic portraits often dismissed as potboilers. They are, in truth, and show some of

**'Friends
recall how
feverishly
Schwitters
worked at
the barn'**



Off the wall: Kurt Schwitters' barn relief, now safely preserved in Newcastle's Hatton Gallery, but sadly divorced from the Lakeside landscape that nurtured the artist's imagination

turmoil of urban life. It could hardly be further removed from the gently swelling and meandering forms explored in his *Merzbau* relief.

Schwitters treated it as a resting-place for the weathered material he gathered from allotments, hedgerows and riverbeds. He admired Pierce's ability to nurture rare trees and shrubs on the estate surrounding the barn. "Pierce is a genius," Schwitters claimed, explaining that "he lets the weeds grow, yet by slight touches he transforms them into a composition as I create art out of rubbish".

Hence my sensation, when looking at the *Merzbau* fragment, that the relief grows out of the wall. Although Schwitters was forced to abandon it, enough was achieved here to let us imagine how he might have elaborated the rest. Appreciating that time was running out, he must have decided to focus on the wall and hope that viewers would grasp his intentions elsewhere in the room.

But even the most affectionate portraits of his lover Edith Thomas seem tame compared with the vigour of his landscapes. Schwitters allies himself here with a German tradition extending back to Louis Corinth's impulsive views of the Walchensee 20 years before. Despite limitations, Schwitters' landscapes convey the ardent energy of his response to the natural world.

In this respect, they enhance our understanding of the far more mysterious and original work carried out in the *Merzbau*. As he grew older, Schwitters' link with city life evaporated. The interior of his Hanover house, the so-called Cathedral of Erotic Misery, had been filled with bristling, anxious references to the psychic

forces he worked disregarding the cold, struggling after dark by candlelight.

Enough of the dry-stone wall

remains visible to suggest that Schwitters respected its flinty presence, even as he covered its surface with a plaster skin. It became the seed-bed where a disparate array of found objects were planted.

Some are so buried that they have grown unrecognisable.

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THE SYMBOLISM IS SIMILARLY CONFLICTING. RACHEL CHAPMAN

SPREADS AN ARRAY OF PETRI DISHES

IN A PATCHWORK PATTERN

ACROSS THE FLOOR. BUT HE WORKS

IN SUCH SOLITUDE, IN THE PAIN

AND POIGNANCY WHICH IT CAN CONVEY. THE

SINGULAR SMALL FIGURE BECOMES THE

STILL POINT OF HIS TURNING WORLD:

THE SOLITARY SAIL OF THE TINY FISHING BOAT, THE SINGLE SHEEP GRAZING

THE DARKENED PASTURE, THE LONESOME MAN ON THE MOUNTAIN ROAD.

THE IMAGINATION RUNS RIDE.

AND YET THE WORKS ARE

THE PRODUCT NOT OF TANGENTIAL

CREATIVE PROCESSES, BUT OF THE TECHNICAL

INSTRUCTIONS OF AN "ART-MACHINE". TYS

IS EVASIVE ABOUT THE NATURE OF THIS OBJECT

Sunset. There is a wistfulness from which it is hard to turn away.

John Martin, 38 Albemarle St, W1 (0171-499 1314), until May 15

IT SEEMS A pity to try to explain the systems which construct Keith Tyson's world. Part scientific, part artistic, part mechanistic, part organic, he creates a perplexing artistic realm among which visitors grope their way, walled in.

The imagination runs riot.

And yet the works are

essentially touching about these

pastel paintings. Their Romantic

spirit is not defined simply

by such clichés as the burning

but apparently, when he wants to work, he dials in to gather data about what to do, then obeys proposals to the letter. Every piece of sculpture in this show — from a hallucinatory frieze of straw to a polythene wrapped doll, from a sculpture of split coffee beans to a plaster highrise block — obeys a system, follows a plan.

It is fascinating to follow the trajectories, to search for sense, to manoeuvre one's way among co-ordinates of space and time.

Delfina, 50 Bermondsey St, SE1 (0171-357 6600), until May 2

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AROUND THE LONDON GALLERIES

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LISTINGS

RSC's new Othello

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marti Hergle

LONDON

THE TEMPEST: Nick Philppou directs Shakespeare's Actors Tour Company, which from modern techniques and Ross English's androgynous Prospero, Lyric Studio, W6 (0171-741 8701). Opens tonight, 7pm. \square

GREEK MYTHS: Continuing this mini-series focusing on Classical mythology, Richard Hickox conducts the City of London Sinfonia in Richard Strauss's *Metamorphosen* and *Morgen* etc, alongside Haydn's *Armena* a Nocte and Beethoven's *Ercole* Symphonies. Royal Opera House (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm. \square

EDINBURGH: Start of the Scottish tour of *Arms of the Cossack*, a training work on dream states by Phebin McCormick and Lee Simonson's improbable *Theatre*. Traverse (0131-228 1404). Tonight-Sun, 8pm. \square

LIVERPOOL: The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra celebrates the 10th anniversary of John McCabe with a concert featuring two of the Merseyside-born composer's best-known works: *Notturno* and *Alba*; his setting of medieval texts; or soprano and piano; and the Concerto for Orchestra. With Judith Howarth as soloist. Adrian Leverett conducts. Philharmonic Hall (0151-708 3789). Tonight, 7.30pm. \square

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON: Ray Feingold, Wales and Richard McCabe play the leads in Michael Attenborough's production of *Othello*. Royal Shakespeare Theatre (01792 256223). Opens tonight, 7pm. \square

Soprano Judith Howarth is soloist with the RLPO

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only \square Some seats available \square Seats at all prices

MAMMA MIA! Enjoyable musical with a tale of three fathers of a bride, in a production by London's Bowdler's producing the musicals of the 1960s. Victoria Palace (0171-929 6368). \square

ESCAPE FROM PTERADACTYL: Still a thrill to see a musical based on the genre of early sci-fi novels, with new rock'n'roll songs from Michael Jeffery. Pleasure Theatre (0171-609 1800). \square

SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER: Sheila Gay plays the venomous mother and Rachel Ward the traumatised wife in Tennessee Williams' classic shocker. Sean Mathias directs. Comedy Theatre (0171-369 1731). \square

MAKING NOISE QUIETLY: Dominic Diopoulou's Oxford Stage Co opens a London season with Robert Holman's trilogy of short plays where strangers meet at the time of war. Eleanor Bron heads the cast. See review, right. Whitehall Theatre (0171-328 1735). \square

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

AN IDEAL HUSBAND (PG): Oliver Parker's sumptuous homage to Wilde's ever-feminine play is hijacked by Rupert Everett's madly charming Lord Goring. With Jeremy Northam and Cate Blanchett.

HAPPINESS (18): Peculiar but often funny, a decent drama about an attempt to find happiness. Todd Solondz's film walks an original, edgy line between fantastical humour and grisly habits.

RETURN TO PARADISE (15): Joseph Ruben's cross of conscience film is only a mild suspense about two Americans who leave prison in a Malaysian prison if they return to help their condemned buddy. With Vince Vaughn and Anne Heche.

PROMESSO (15): Tony Harrison's dense film-poem is a work of surreal genius and endless layers. Michael Fassbender is compelling as Zeun's (lucky) son, but at what he has achieved and destroyed with his ardent life.

ACTRESSES (15): Three famous Canadian actresses take on old jealousies. Too stately, too self-conscious, with the dramatic impetus of a slug. A static self-indulgent piece by Ventura Pons.

EAT THE ENEMY: Ken McElroy directs a new Chris Lee play, described as a Groundhog Day on speed, where three clowns must live through the same meal four times. Old Red Lion (0171-837 7816). Preview tonight, 8pm. Opens tomorrow, 7pm. \square

ELSEWHERE

BASINGSTOKE: The final of the London Mozart Players' two concerts here tonight under Matthias Bamert (7.30pm) aims to show Baroque music has influence in 20th-century. On the programme are Purcell, Villa-Lobos, Mozart, Bach, Beethoven and Nyman. For the second concert (9.30pm) soprano Christine Caine joins the players in a world premiere by Ian Venables, preceded by pieces by Edward Rutherford. Amstel (01256 842424). \square

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ARTS

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY APRIL 21 1999

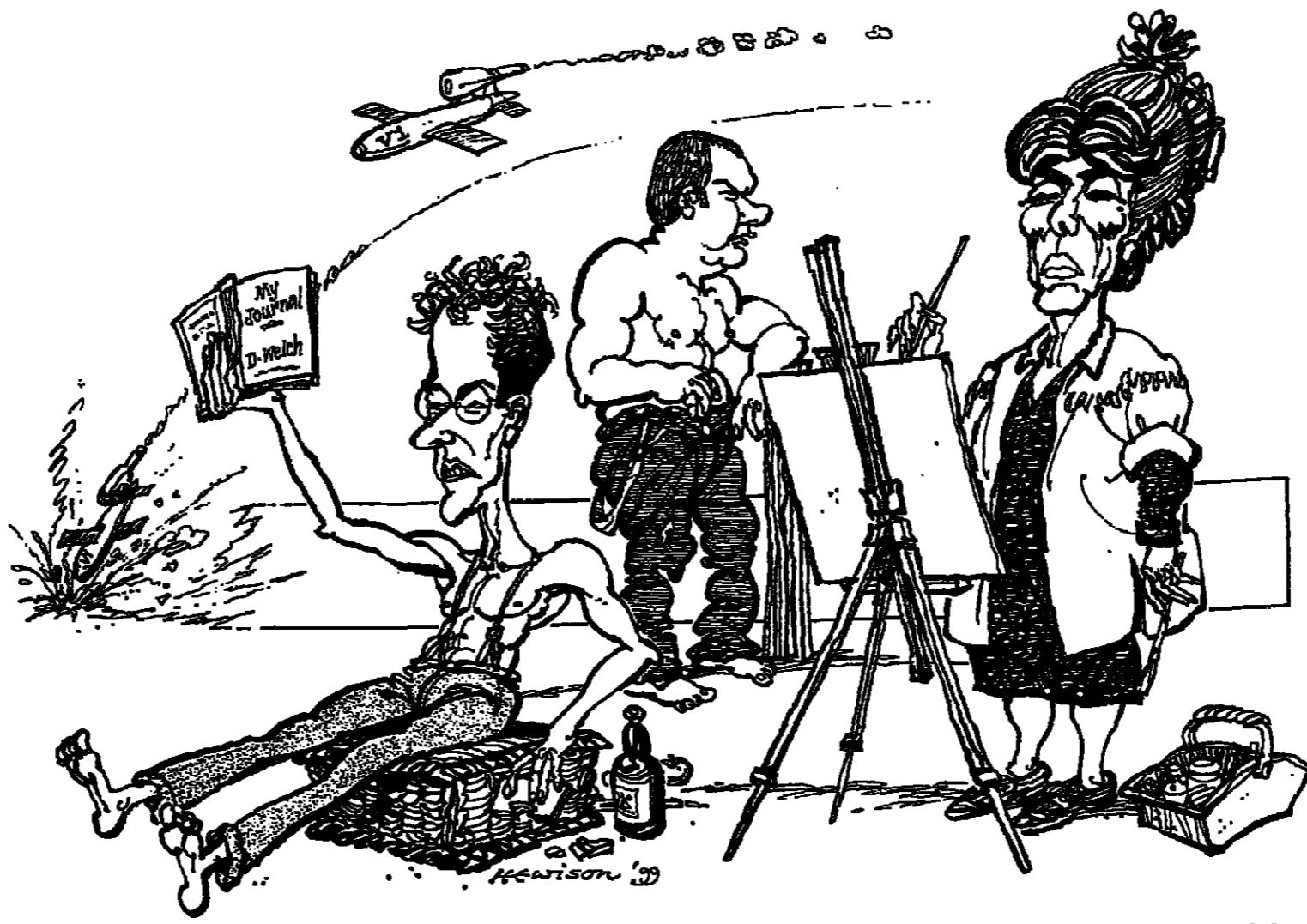
THEATRE

Whitehall's echoes of war

Classic clown magic

Hackney Empire's Year of the Clown season got its first dose of the old silent magic from the hyperactive Catalonian *Leandre*. Promoting clowns must be a hideously difficult task. The very word evokes a cruel mish-mash of curmudgeonly old sods who have spent their life on the road with a moth-eaten animal show, or awful wacky New Age juggling types who escaped from Steiner school at the age of 14 but still believe children should be given the freedom to torture nuns so long as they are expressing themselves. *Leandre* is none of the above; he is more like the beautiful building that you find after getting lost and then waste the rest of your life trying to get back to — the lost domain of the clown world.

Of course, he knows that we



Peter Hanly, John Lloyd Fillingham and Eleanor Bron in Oxford Stage Company's timely revival of Robert Holman's *Making Noise Quietly*

Collaterally damaged

Walking down Whitehall after seeing Robert Holman's *Making Noise Quietly*, I passed Serb demonstrators blowing whistles and waving flags outside the Defence Ministry, and it struck me how weirdly opportune this revival is. When the Oxford Stage Company decided to launch a London season with a long-forgotten trilogy about the side-effects of war, it could hardly have foreseen that British bombs would be exploding in the Balkans on the day of its opening. Yet off they go — and who can say how odd and intricate their ultimate impact will be?

Drop a big, heavy object into a pond, and tiny ripples end up in unpredictable places. In Holman's view, it is the same with war. In *Being Friends*, which occurs in 1944, a conscientious objector decides to join the army, not because doodiebugs are landing near by but because he cannot forget seeing a badly tortured German die in a military hospital. In *Lost*, a Yorkshire mother hears that the naval officer son who had rejected her has been killed in the Falklands. And in the title play, a German-Jewish businesswoman, once the victim of concentration camp sadism, warily befriends a veteran of the South Atlantic, an angry, bitter English lisp private with his deeply disturbed stepson in tow.

The very name *Making Noise Quietly* sums up Holman's plays. They have always been unemphatic, unpretentious, yet resonant. From *German Skirters* in 1977 through *The Estuary* in 1980 to *Making Noise Quietly* in 1986, they have confounded mathematical logic by persuading you that less is more. Hitherto Holman has found his home on the fringe, never in the West End; so this is a surprise and, for me, a joy to find so representative a trio engrossed beneath Nelson's Column — and in Deborah Bruce's sensitive production, implicitly reproaching that triumphal edifice.

There are obvious links between the plays. All their characters have been touched and

damaged by violence and suffering.

All would seem to communicate more deeply with strangers than with those who know them better. But I must admit that reacquaintance with the trilogy leaves me most enthusiastic about its first two-thirds.

Being Friends is finely played by Peter Hanly and John Lloyd Fillingham, the one a

young artist cheerfully unashamed of his homosexuality, the other a Quaker who surprises himself by baring his sexual secrets, his conscience and finally his body; and *Lost* boasts a marvellously unsentimental, moving performance from Eleanor Bron as a woman beneath whose defensive respectability and plodding clichés there's grief, bewilderment and fury at the dead son she must try to think of as a war hero.

Like many of his plays, *Lost* is set in Holman's native Teesside, which may be why it seems psychologically truer than *Making Noise Quietly*, in which Bron struggles to

bring conviction to a Holocaust survivor earnestly trying to civilise a feral child and his almost equally troubled stepfather.

Yet here too there is plenty of deft human observation, most strikingly in Fillingham's powerful portrayal of an inarticulate soldier who cannot stop himself taking out his self-hatred and rage on the pathetic boy he loves and who loves him. Here too Holman's distinctive qualities — that spare richness, that astringent abundance — leave us with drama quietly to relish.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

THEATRE

Lionel Bart was working with the Queen's Theatre on its revival of his 1959 musical comedy when he died earlier this month. No doubt he would have enjoyed seeing its spirited production, which certainly does its dampest to turn his rather ragged period piece into a right old Soho joint.

Period it definitely is — dated, more like. This is a world in which bent comedy coppers are forever in pursuit of shifty old bags and tarts with hearts. The slim plot concerns small-time gangster Fred's attempt to turn his down-at-heel bar from a hang-out for hookers, hoodlums and has-beens into a sleek Sixties-style joint.

Quite rightly, the production team has

gone to town on all this anachronistic excess.

The foyer has been tricked out as a

street scene, complete with pie-and-mash stalls. It all seems a bit confused: the play takes place in the Fifties, the centre-piece of the foyer is a VJ-day celebration, and despite the very East End set, the setting is actually supposed to be in Soho.

Never mind: good, hokey fun, rather

than anything so po-faced as authenticity, is what is needed here, and all this flummery makes for a festive atmosphere. So too does the curtain-raiser, in which a chorus enters doing the hokey-cokey and makes a great ruckus in the midst of the audience. The multitalented cast, who are also the band, likewise chase each other around the seats.

Their performances are rooted in pan-

to, but then so are the characters. Steve Edwin is sound as the tough-but-vulnerable Fred; Phil Hearne is leery as the completely artless dodger Redhot; and Tony Hunt gets the marinet plot and monotone boom of the clodish Sergeant Collins. In particularly good voice were Diana Croft as the put-upon maid Lily, and Liz Marsh and Nina Lucking as lovable girls Betty and Rosey, squealing away à la Barbara Windsor (for it was our Babs who was the original Rosey). The star turn, though, is Carol Sloman as a raddled whore whose every painful step is an agonising odyssey. She had the audience in such hysterics that they drowned out much of the show. The cast are sweetly directed by Bob Carlton.

The piece itself has its moments, though in Frank Norman's wordy book many of them are drawn out far too long, especially in the protracted second half. But when Bart's bright, breezy songs take over, things bowl right along.

Although *Leandre* is eminently suitable for adults he is also family entertainment in the real sense: a show that you can take very bad-tempered 13-year-olds to and they might actually thank you afterwards.

There are two more abstract elements of his performance that are worth commending. First, his rapport with the audience, which was extraordinary given that he was performing in a country where audiences are famous for being participation-phobic. And secondly, the absolute beauty of his movements, which were so smooth and beguiling that he often resembled one of those films of people taking their clothes off played backwards.

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Although *Leandre</*

■ POP

Tom Petty returns in style

Robert Carsen's staging of *Semele* was the last operatic throw of the old regime at the Aix festival in 1996. It would be difficult to think of a more stylish way in which to exit. ENO had the wit at the time to book it as a co-production and it arrives at the Coliseum very much as it was then, complete with the luscious Rosemary Joshua more secure than ever in the title role.

The first act is still a bit stodgy as Semele takes her time deciding between a royal marriage on earth and the luxuries Jupiter is offering in heaven. Once she sees that a little social climbing is within her grasp, with a possible move from mortal to god, everything changes. Handel stops writing an oratorio and opts for a bawdy comedy, reflecting the gimlet eye of Congreve's libretto for the follies and foibles of the day.

Carsen suggests in a series of delicately pointed stage jokes that nothing much has changed over the years. The royals have their weaknesses, chief of which are greed and lust, and the gods — or super-royals — suffer from just the same faults. According to Congreve the way of the gods was much the same as the way of the world.

Rosemary Joshua's Semele is a blonde tramp, whose only real asset is her body and whose only aims are endless pleasure, as she states in her Act 1 aria, and a seat among the planets. She spends much of the evening in fetching satin underwear, and at one point nothing at all, while she indulges Jupiter. The vocal flow is just as uninhibited, with silvery roulades tumbling out into the Coliseum. The Mirror aria, *Myself I shall adore*, was especially brilliant. Baby Doll meets one or two coloratura so-

OPERA
Semele
Coliseum

pranos who had better not be named.

John Mark Ainsley plays Jupiter as a balding boss intent on having his pie on the side, not for the first or the last time to judge from the reactions of Juno (Susan Bickley, an all too recognisable regal figure in head scarf and welly boots). Jupiter may send Semele to her death when her demands become excessive, but before then he sings with great tenderness. Every phrase of *Where'er you walk*, taken very slowly and quietly, had the patrician shaping once given it by Heddle Nash.

The supporting cast is uniformly excellent, led by Sarah Connolly's warm-voiced Imoister of Semele, and just about the only sympathetic character in the piece. There are sharp impersonations from Iris Kelly as Juno's hobbly-skirted secretary, the Miss Moneypenny of the spheres. Graeme Danby's Sonnus is a pantaloons straight from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a sharp reminder that Britten's opera is the only other Carsen production seen at a major London house.

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JOHN HIGGINS



A god can Handel the goods: Jupiter (John Mark Ainsley) is intent on making the earth move for Semele (Rosemary Joshua) before the affair turns less than heavenly

Petty-minded people

POP

You need rhino skin if you're gonna begin to walk through... this world, sings Tom Petty on his new album with the Heartbreakers, *Echo*, released this week. In a 23-year recording career the band have developed just such a hide, the better to repel the somewhat malcontent reviews that have greeted the record in the UK.

Echo is the first album credited to the band in eight years, but the Heartbreakers have always been central to Petty's creativity. When he makes supposedly solo records, they play on them, which is a bit like taking the mother-in-law on holiday. The new set is accused of being rooted in some time-

locked rock nirvana, its face set sternly against any whiff of contemporary influence. So what you see in Uncle Tom's rock'n'roll cabin is definitely what you get, and the fans who have stayed with him in an up-and-down British career got the chance to see at close quarters on Monday evening. The band's stock has taken a tumble here since the days when they could play five nights at Wembley Arena. As

ANGELA LUERAND



Happy to be rocking and rolling: Tom Petty at the Empire

London's likely lads

Another Level had no control over the events that conspired to make them the top turn in London last Saturday night, Paul Sexton writes. The DJ title bout between Falboy Slim and Armand Van Helden fell victim to the Brixton bomb, while Paul Heaton of the Beautiful South, who always talks a good fight, was struck horse and unable to enter the ring at Wembley. But the improved billing for the London quartet was in keeping with their rapid rise through the card in the past 12 months.

With a hoard of hits in the locker since *Be Alone, No More* made the first of two chart sorties in February last year, the group had rescheduled and upped their debut British tour to accommodate ticket demand, and there was never a suggestion that they were fighting above their weight. As underlined by an audience dominated by pubescent girls, their success has been channelled through a se-

sied by the soul bubblegum of *Goody Goody*, due to feature on their second album later this year.

By then, they may well have a second chart-topper to display next to last summer's *Freak Me*. The well-connected group have the first single, Diane Warren's *From The Heart*, from the forthcoming Julia Roberts-Hugh Grant picture *Notting Hill*. It is a suitably romantic lead guaranteed approval from their fan base.

Be Alone No More closed the main set in singalong fashion, and after an unambitious encore version of Simply Red's *Holding Back The Years*, there was a sharper edge to *Summertime*, written for them by hip-hop notable TQ and due to launch them in the US next month. *Freak Me*, the bump'n'grind chart-topper appropriated from the Atlanta soulsters Silk, was triumphant. If Another Level can export London soul to the States, sales of nutty slack in Newcastle may yet be viable.

PAUL SEXTON

ries of polished home-grown R&B numbers with a good dollop of sex appeal to quicken the teenage pulse.

They entered to a stage layout reminiscent of that used by visiting champions Dru Hill a few weeks ago, with a stereo piece band doing sterling work in the shadows. Setting off with *I Want You For Myself*, their convincing vocals and harmonies easily shared, they had the swagger of Lotharios, fashioned from the mould of such kings of the heartstrings as Boyz II Men and Keith Sweat.

But their Top 40 sensibilities are more up-front than those of such urban figureheads. Another Level came to the attention of pop crowds as the opening act on Janet Jackson's last European tour, and their keen ear for crossover was emphasised by an audience dominated by pubescent girls; their success has been channelled through a se-

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ARTS

■ CONCERTS

King's goes Russian

Heaven on earth with a satin doll

DONALD COOPER



A god can Handel the goods: Jupiter (John Mark Ainsley) is intent on making the earth move for Semele (Rosemary Joshua) before the affair turns less than heavenly

They were described as the choir of King's College, Cambridge, but surface details suggested impostors. No red cassocks or freshly-ironed surplices, just sombre black gowns and ties. None of that honey smeared over the notes by the chapel acoustic? And what were they singing? Rachmaninov's *Vespers*, if you please, written for the Russian Orthodox church in 1915, and largely based on traditional chants.

This is the King's choir in 1999, led into new musical territory by the demands of fashion and the inquisitiveness of its current director, Stephen Cleobury. New Age minimal-

ism and millennium fever have recently swept Rachmaninov's setting to popularity. The choir's recording company, EMI, felt the moment was ripe. In March came the CD. And here was the concert, in St John's, Smith Square, packed with choir butts, the devout, the curious, and the parents of the heroic little boys struggling for an hour to clutch vocal scores half their size.

On top of that, they were singing in Russian. As the King's troupe moved up and

down the 15 canticles' simple melodies, sparsely woven with parallel chords and bell-tolling phrases, no one could take them for a mature Russian choir, voices vast as the steppes, deep as the blood of a

hundred oxen. But, loud or soft, they still produced a thrilling sound, sensitive to the rhythmic phrasing and breathing under awesome control.

Trebles began like Anglican angels but soon warmed to their task. The basses even

managed to pluck some kind of low B-flat from their boots

for the end of the *Nunc dimittis*. By the end, performance fatigue was creeping in, but this was understandable.

Some Rachmaninov fatigue

was also noticeable. Individu-

al numbers in the *Vespers* radiate brilliance and intensity; but as a concert experience this music lacks structure and variety. Rachmaninov once said his idea of heaven was a place where his Prelude in C sharp minor was never played. On aural grounds it is a pity Rachmaninov's heaven also has a ban on counterpoint.

Here Thomas Tallis came to the rescue. For the King's men began the concert on familiar Tudor ground, weaving effortlessly through the polyphonic maze of his *Lamentations of Jeremiah*. It was pungent; it was lovely; it was short.

GEOFF BROWN

way and eventually return majestically, and pulled all the strands of its complex structure together.

Nothing could have been better

how Schubert is the poet to Beethoven's dramatist than her juxtaposition of both composers here. Schubert's Sonata in D, D 850, may be his most virtuosic and exuberant piano work, but it is also full of bucolic charm. Uchida caught all its freshness and played with unfettered vigour, especially in the dancing syncopations of the Scherzo. The airy finale had brilliant clarity, and the Scarlatti and Mozart encores that followed were played with featherweight delicacy.

JOHN ALLISON

Voices big in heart

CONCERTS

■ MITSUKO UCHIDA
■ GLYNDENBOURNE

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JOHN ALLISON

Storm over Sussex

■ MITSUKO UCHIDA
■ GLYNDENBOURNE

Her account of Beethoven's Sonata No 31 in A flat, Op 110, was equally wide-ranging. The opening had calm serenity, giving way to the rippling arpeggios that she dispatched with great delicacy. She built the work steadily towards its lofty finale, a fugue that thundered out organ-like only to lose its

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JOHN ALLISON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament: JOHN WILSON

Age 26.

Professor: Conductor-arranger. Winner of the Tagore Gold Medal, the plumb award at the Royal College of Music. He wears two hats this week, conducting his own Strinolin of Westminster at St John's, Smith Square, tomorrow and leading his easy listening ensemble, the John Wilson Orchestra, in its regular slot at Kensington's Royal Garden Hotel on Saturday. He'll also conduct Richard Strauss's *Don Juan* at Kenwood this summer.

Not to mention the rave reviews for his recorded series of Eric Coates' works. Gateshead-born Wilson has been a Coates admirer since his teens. "It's real arrangers' music, a happy combination of orchestral sound and well-crafted melodies. There are very few composers who are unjustly neglected; when you listen to their music you realise why they are neglected. But Coates isn't one of them."

Who else has influenced him? The arranger Robert Farndon is a role model too; he often sends Wilson scores to perform. Nelson Riddle is up at the top of the list. "His

string arrangement on Sinatra's version of *I Get Along Without You Very Well* is my favourite recording of all time. There's some wonderful contrapuntal writing in there."

Can we hear the JW Orchestra on record? Yes. The ensemble, which also plays regular dates at Pizza On The Park in Knightsbridge, has released its debut album, *This Is The John Wilson Orchestra*, on the Velvetone label. Singer Sarah Moulton guests on vocals; other pieces are played as lush instrumental.

CLIVE DAVIS

So is he part of the so-called easy-listening boom? "It's a little too gimmicky for me. This whole area of music has gone astray. Now, thanks to CDs, we're able to sift the good stuff. I think light music should be given an evening at the Proms. It would sell out easily."

We're not talking kitsch, then? "No, you have to take the material seriously. I'm the world's biggest snob when it comes to choosing the orchestra that plays under me."

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EN
O

Semele

Rodney Hobson introduces a four-page report on the UK awards for export, technological and environmental achievement

Battle cry as magnificent few fly flag

The Prince of Wales has launched a campaign to revive the Queen's industry awards in the wake of a slump in applications.

Only 765 companies applied this year for the Queen's Awards for Export, Technological and Environmental Achievement. The smallest total since the awards began in 1966.

Despite the disappointing fall in the number of applications, the quality of aspiring companies has held up well. The total of 101 winners out of 765 nominations, 13.2 per cent, is well above the usual success rate. Last year awards went to just under 11 per cent and in 1997 to only 7.8 per cent.

This year all the environmental award winners have tasted success for the first time and 30 winners across the board had not applied before.

But all three categories registered the lowest level of interest to date. The 520 Export applications marked only the second time that the total for this category had slipped below 700.

The Technology tally at 163 was 44 fewer than last year, itself the previous low point. Nominations for Environment fell below 100 for the first time, compared with 240 applications when this section was introduced in 1993.

The Prince of Wales was asked by the Queen to chair a committee of business people and senior government officials to review the awards.

The awards, made each year on the Queen's birthday, April 21, were originally launched during a balance of payments crisis. There was also a new awareness of technological change. Harold Wilson, then Prime Minister,

spoke of the "white heat of technological revolution".

Applications built up to a peak at 1,860 in 1978. On average, there have been about 1,000 applications for the export awards, 300 for technology and just under 150 for the environment. Roughly one applicant in ten succeeds.

Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, announced just before Christmas that, at Buckingham Palace's suggestion, there should be a review of the scheme this year with any recommendations taking effect next year.

Roger Watson, secretary to the review committee, says: "The awards have been on something of a downward trend — technology because of the shrinking defence markets and exports because of the strong pound. The way forward may well be to broaden the environmental award beyond mere technological innovation to reward good environmental management."

There is not enough awareness of the awards among consumers. Their real value at present is between business competitors. They need a higher profile."

The committee will make its recommendations in June. In the meantime companies can still express an interest in the year 2000 awards with the Queen's Awards office so that application forms can be sent out as soon as they are available.

This year, smaller companies in particular are still showing interest, reflecting the growth of the small business sector in the UK economy.

Crambene Allen Publishing, which produces technical periodicals on steel making, refining and petrochemicals, has

only eight employees. So does UK Project Support, a Norwich-based recruitment agency for the offshore oil and gas industry.

Brunton's Propellers and its 11-strong workforce at Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, enjoy a technology award while Corney & Barrow (Broker Services), a wine broker, has a staff of 12, although it is part of a larger group.

Another encouraging sign is the increase in applications from the financial services sector. It forms a third of the export winners, twice the usual proportion.

There are two double award winners this time. Digital Engineering of Belfast, a computer company, and Snell & Wilcox, a broadcasting and telecoms manufacturer at Petersfield, Hampshire. Both win export and technology awards.



SILLY string and coloured hair do not win many awards, but GAC (UK) Ltd, based at Cwmbran in Wales, has won a Queen's export award by exporting the party spirit. Christopher Warman writes.

Aerosols of silly string, temporary hair-colour in the most eccentric of shades and glitter sprays are exported to more than 30 countries, accounting for 90 per cent of the company's £10 million turnover last year. By far the largest export market is the United States, followed by France and Germany.

GAC has more than doubled its production during the past three years and

it expects a bumper year this year as people prepare for millennium parties. "We are having difficulty meeting demand," says Stefan Volcke Jr, marketing director of the parent company Goodmark. "At any given moment, a party is going on somewhere in the world. We provide people with products that can be used for any festive occasion, from Christmas and new year through to carnivals, birthdays and weddings."

More than 30 million cans of silly string were produced last year, enough to circle the globe 60 times.

Hi-tech approach to exports

Only two firms have won double awards this year. Digital Engineering, a telecoms equipment maker at Mallusk, Belfast, and Snell & Wilcox, broadcasting equipment specialist at Petersfield, Hampshire, both take an export and a technology award, and are now recognised as world leaders in their respective fields.

Digital Engineering, set up in 1983 by Aubrey Sayers, the managing director, with backing from Ledu, the Northern Ireland organisation that supports small businesses, has only 30 employees yet has more than trebled exports in the past three years. It makes equipment that telecoms companies can use to test or demonstrate

their own products and to train staff. It won the technology award for a product that simulates ISDN high-quality telephone lines.

The Emulit ISDN simulator has been a big seller worldwide since it was introduced in 1993. There are five versions, ranging from the smallest, which can be used in exhibitions, to larger ones for use by manufacturers to test their products.

A new product, the Arcaplex, which enables users to split one high-capacity ISDN line into 15 low-capacity channels, has already brought a £2 million order from Austria.

Digital Engineering exports more than 80 per cent of its output. Caroline Scott, the sales and marketing executive, says: "Sales have held up well despite the strong pound and are growing strongly in Europe. We have 40 distributors in 30 countries and we are always looking for new markets."

Snell & Wilcox has now picked up eight awards over the past nine years. This time the technology accolade is for its Prefix product, which improves the quality of television pictures before they are transmitted.

David Cunningham, the marketing executive, says: "Prefix cleans up the picture by removing extraneous noise before the picture is compressed for transmission. The British have a reputation for being good at investing in technology only to have others exploit it. We like to think we do both."

The benefits of Prefix are not only better pictures but significant cost savings. Clear pictures occupy a narrower transmission band than dirty ones, and bandwidth is expensive.

Snell & Wilcox, established in 1974, now has a 500-strong workforce worldwide. Exports have grown by 81 per cent over the past three years.

Mr Cunningham says: "We have been studying digital television for 11 years so we already have products to address this rapidly emerging market. We have not been badly affected by the strong pound or the economic turmoil in Asia. Even if there is recession, people will still watch TV."

RODNEY HOBSON



Digital Engineering's Aubrey Sayers with one of the company's products

Help to fight superbugs

Tony Dawe on innovations from bacteria detection to asthma inhalers

Health scares caused by *E. coli* bacteria and *Cryptosporidium* may be on the way out thanks to ChemScan, the world's first bacterial detection system to provide results within minutes rather than days. ChemScan, developed by the Technology Partnership of Royston, Hertfordshire, is capable of detecting a single cell of microbial contamination using a revolutionary method that needs no multiplication and incubation.

The breakthrough is one of several in the medical field to feature in this year's Queen's Awards for Technological Achievement, announced today.

Contamination of food and drinks by *Cryptosporidium* and *E. coli* can kill or cause severe illness yet, until the invention of ChemScan, both were detected mostly after people had fallen ill.

Dr Christopher Graeme-Barber, the firm's marketing director, says: "Samples would be taken when people went to their doctors with an upset stomach, but it would take days to get the results and discover if they were suffering from something more serious. ChemScan is a laser scanning system capable of finding within minutes a single living bacteria in a cup of liquid."

Innovations must achieve commercial success to win a Queen's award — ChemScan is now used by many British water companies and by food, drinks and drugs firms. It is expected to raise the purity of



The directors of Serck, Ian Dugan, David Woolley and Christopher Teed, inspect the exhaust-gas cooling system

water and mass-produced food dramatically in the next millennium. The system has also been used in hospitals to check for cancer cells and viral infection.

Minnows and giants of the medical world are among other award winners. Immunodiagnostic Systems, which employs 27 staff in Tyne and Wear, gets a prize for the development of medical test kits for finding vitamin D in blood samples.

The immuno-separation process is faster and more sensitive than other methods. A hundred samples can be analysed in two days: using alternative methods, it will take three days to analyse a maximum of 24 samples. The absence of vitamin D can cause rickets, while the presence of

bone loss from osteoporosis. Dr Roger Duggan, the company's managing director, says: "The kit is now our biggest selling product. Vitamin D plays an important role in the absorption of calcium which leads to strong bones and teeth in children."

Glaxo Research and Development has invented a new method for delivering asthma drugs. Aquacel, a multi-dose dry-powder inhaler, it delivers a precise dosage and, because it is easy to hold and use, is suitable for both children and adults.

Acordis Speciality Fibres of Coventry and ConvaTec Ltd of Deside, Flintshire, share a joint award for developing AQUACEL Hydrofibre wound dressing. The dressing forms a gel which covers the surface of the wound by

moulding itself over the contours, ensuring that the wound remains moist. The gel prevents the dressing from sticking to the wound and so makes removal less painful.

A further common theme among the technological awards are innovations which make contrasting forms of transport quicker, more efficient and environmentally friendly.

Brunton's Propellers of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, wins an award for a sailing boat propeller which alters its pitch to suit the conditions. The pitch of the blades, which can swivel through 360 degrees, is set solely by the action of hydrodynamic and centrifugal forces which reduce fuel consumption, engine noise and vibration and make the boat travel faster. Autoprop has been fitted to 2,500 vessels.

An exhaust-gas cooling system might not sound the most exciting of developments, but the product from Serck Heat Transfer of Birmingham deserves its award because it has already been fitted to many diesel-powered cars, making them cleaner and reducing both fuel consumption and emissions.

David Woolley, director of Serck's exhaust-gas cooling division, says: "We have had the satisfaction of seeing the system adopted by many of the world's leading manufacturers including BMW, Ford and Volkswagen. To date half a million units have been installed and there has not been a single failure."

Acordis Speciality Fibres of Coventry and ConvaTec Ltd of Deside, Flintshire, share a joint award for developing AQUACEL Hydrofibre wound dressing. The dressing forms a gel which covers the surface of the wound by

QUEEN'S AWARD FOR TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENT



Acordis Speciality Fibres, Coventry West Midlands: AQUACEL Hydrofibre wound dressing.

AirSense Technology Ltd, Hitchin, Hertfordshire: Stratos-HSSD incipient fire/ smoke detection system.

ALSTOM Energy Ltd, Rugby, Warwickshire: Advanced 3-D steam turbine blading with improved efficiency for high power density applications.

Brunton's Propellers Ltd, Clacton-on-Sea: Autoprop automatic variable pitch marine propeller.

ConvaTec Ltd, Deside, Flintshire: AQUACEL Hydrofibre

wound dressing (joint award with Acordis).

Digital Engineering Ltd, Malvern, Worcestershire: Design/development of ISDN central office

simulators that emulate different country variants of ISDN telecoms worldwide.

Glaxo Research and Development Ltd, Greenford, Middlesex: Diskus multidose dry powder inhaler.

Immunodiagnostic Systems Ltd, Boldon, Tyne & Wear: Determination of vitamin D in human serum & plasma.

Marathon Baking Ltd, Rochdale, Lancashire: COPSL (a press compensating mat).

Exhaust Gas Cooling Division of Serck Heat Transfer Ltd, Birmingham: Exhaust gas cooler (for diesel emissions improvement).

Snell & Wilcox Ltd, Petersfield, Hampshire: MPEG compression pre-processor for high quality noise reduction/digital decoding of video signals.

The Technology Partnership Ltd, Royston, Hertfordshire: ChemScan RDI for microbial detection and identification.

Zeneca Agrochemicals, Haslemere, Surrey: AMISTAR fungicide.

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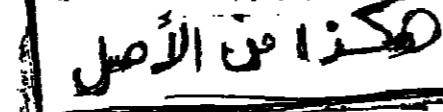
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Greeks offer inspiration

One of Northern Ireland's oldest companies has won the Queen's Award for Export Achievement for the first time, with a product inspired by the white marble quarried on the Greek island of Paros.

Established in 1857, Belleek Pottery of Co Fermanagh is a manufacturer of fine Parian china giftware, pictured left, and tableware that has seen significant export growth in recent years.

In 1993 Belleek reported export sales of £1.8 million as part of an overall turnover of £3.57 million. By 1998, export sales had risen to £4.08 million and turnover to £6.42 million. During that time the workforce has grown from 120 to 200.

Belleek Pottery, whose sister companies are Galway Irish Crystal and Aynsley China, exports Parian china worldwide, with key export markets including America, Canada, the Caribbean, duty-free areas, France, Italy, Australia, the Middle East and Russia.

John Maguire, Belleek Group's managing director, says the company has invested considerable time and money in getting to know its export market customers and in responding to their specific needs with new product development. "The expansion of the group to include Galway Irish Crystal and Aynsley China has also brought us a wealth of additional export expertise," he says.

CHRISTOPHER WARMAN



Boat prop saves fuel

AN ingenious boat propeller earns a technological achievement award for Brunton's Propellers of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, one of the smallest firms among the winners, with 11 employees. *Christopher Warman writes*

The company has developed the Autoprop, an automatic variable pitch marine propeller which alters its pitch to suit the operating conditions of the vessel on which it is mounted.

The blade pitch is set by the action of the hydrodynamic and centrifugal forces to offer much higher efficiency over a wider range of operating speeds than can be achieved by conventional fixed propellers.

This action results in higher vessel speeds, reduced fuel consumption and lower emissions into the environment.

QUEEN'S AWARD FOR EXPORT ACHIEVEMENT



Agreco UK Ltd — Manufacturing, Dumbarion, West Dunbartonshire: Generators and oil-free air compressors.
Akos Healthcare Group Ltd, St Albans, Hertfordshire: International healthcare consultancy and contract services.
Allen & Overy, London: Legal services.
Beardow & Adams (Adhesives) Ltd, Milton Keynes: Hot melt adhesives.
Belleek Pottery Ltd, Belleek, Co Fermanagh, Northern Ireland: Parian china giftware.
British Aerospace Airbus, Filton, Bristol: Airbus airliner wing design and manufacture.
BUPA International, Brighton: Private medical insurance.
CRP Print & Packaging Ltd, Corby, Northamptonshire: Flexographic printing of packaging items.
Cambrian Consultants Ltd, Usk, Monmouthshire: Geoscience, engineering, training and software expertise to the oil and gas industry.
Cambridge Pharma Consultancy Ltd, Cambridge: International management consultancy to the pharmaceutical industry.
Caterpillar (UK) Ltd (Telehandler Division), Desford, Leicestershire: Telehandlers.
H. Charlesworth & Co Ltd t/a The Charlesworth Group, Huddersfield, Kirklees: Typesetting and printing of scientific journals.
Colortrac Ltd, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire: Large-format digital colour scanners.
Compagraphics International Ltd, Glenrothes, Fife: Photomasks for the semiconductor industry.
Corney & Barrow (Broker Services) Ltd, London: Fine & rare wines.
Crambeth Allen Publishing, Craven Arms, Shropshire: Technical periodicals.
Crystalox Ltd, Wantage, Oxfordshire: Crystal growth equipment.
Data Connection Ltd, Enfield, Greater London: Communications and networking software products and software engineering services.
Digital Engineering Ltd, Malusk, Belfast, Northern Ireland: Apparatus for developing and testing of telecommunications equipment.
Dorsel Cereals Ltd, Dorchester, Dorset: Breakfast cereals.
Drock Ltd, Groby, Leicestershire: Electronic pressure measurement devices, pressure calibrators and aircraft ground support equipment.
Durham Associates Group Ltd, Castle Eden, Co Durham: Training in business administration.
GAC (UK) Ltd, Cwmbran, Torfaen, Wales: Aerosols for parties, celebrations and decoration.
GE Aircraft Engine Services Ltd, London: Repair and overhaul of aircraft engines.
GEW (EC) Ltd, Redhill, Surrey: Ultraviolet curing equipment for printing machines.
Gerty Connections Ltd, Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland: Cable assemblies and general equipment wire.
Glenmorangie plc, Broxburn, West Lothian, Scotland: Malt and blended Scotch whisky.
Gurralp Systems Ltd, Aldermaston, West Berkshire: Seismometers.
H.D.A. Forgings Ltd, Redditch, Worcestershire: Specialist forgings.
Heatrite, a Division of Meggit (UK) Ltd, Poole, Dorset: Highly compact printed circuit heat exchangers (PCHEs).
M4 Data Ltd, Wells, Somerset: Data storage devices.
The Macallan Distillers Ltd, Craigellachie, Moray, Scotland: Highland malt Scotch whisky.
MacDuff Shetfish (Scotland) Ltd, MacDuff, Aberdeenshire, Scotland: Fresh and frozen shellfish.
McCormick Europe, Condiment Division, Paisley, Renfrewshire, Scotland: Condiments and seasonings.
Motorola Ltd GSM Systems Division, Swindon, Wiltshire: Cellular radio telephone equipment.
PAI International Ltd, London: Investment management.
Ilmor Engineering Ltd, Brixworth, Northamptonshire: CART and Formula One Mercedes-Benz racing engines.
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PAI International Ltd,

An airport is the surprise export winner on the day that the aircraft industry celebrates landing the top awards. Tony Dawe reports

How aviation soared to fresh heights

A viation companies feature prominently among the contrasting industries that have picked up prizes in the Queen's Awards for Export Achievement announced today.

Aircraft manufacturers, engine repairers and companies providing comfort for passengers and essential instruments for the planes are all recognised, but the most surprising export winner is an airport.

Noise restrictions, the lack of rail links and the initial sluggish pace of Docklands development all helped London City Airport to run up huge losses in its first years. Today it is booming with a dozen European airlines serving a score of destinations. International carriers, including Air France, Alitalia and Lufthansa, fly into the Docklands airport bringing passengers who spend money in its shops and cafés and on travel in the capital.

"With more than half of the passengers travelling via London City being resident in Europe, we have created a significantly increased contribution to the UK's invisible earnings," says Richard Gooding, the airport's managing director. "These awards are not given lightly and to be the first air-

port to win one is a great achievement."

A more predictable winner is British Aerospace for its work on the Airbus, the most successful European co-operation in building passenger planes. The Airbus began life as a twin-engined aircraft with limited range, but a series of models is now being built, including the four-engined A340-500 with a range of 9,000 miles.

To be the first airport to win is a great honour'

Exports have almost doubled over the past three years and the company is also studying a Superjumbo capable of carrying up to 650 passengers.

The 2,000th Airbus will be completed shortly. British Aerospace has made the wings for all of them, employing 7,500 directly, although a total of 62,000 people are involved in the project throughout the UK. The award for export achievement also goes to a company that overhauls aircraft engines for more than 70 airlines. Based in Nantgarw,

the airline business has

grown until it has become the

most important for us," says Peter Benson, the managing director.

"We make everything from a very economic flame-retardant mod-acrylic blanket to the most luxurious lambswool ones, as well as headrests, pillows and duvets for first-class sleeping cabins."

Completing the list of aviation winners is Druck of Groby, Leicestershire, that makes products ranging from pressure sensors through to sophisticated aircraft ground-support equipment.

The company exports to more than 60 countries and has won important contracts from the US Army and Navy for test sets used to calibrate aircraft instruments such as altimeters.

The airline business has

average cost savings of 45 per cent, enabling users to recover their investment within a year.

ICI's Syntex business was

formed last year by the merger

of three of its branches with the

catalyst businesses of

Crossfield and Unichema pur-

chased from Unilever. The

headquarters are at Billings-

ham, Cleveland.

It wins an award for the de-

velopment of its HYDECAT

process for treating waste sudi-

um hypochlorite, a by-product

of chlorine use or manufacture.

Waste treatment produces

sodium hypochlorite, a toxin

which the HYDECAT catalyst

converts into a salt solution

and oxygen. No chemicals are

needed, and the threat to the

environment is eliminated.

Emil Process Systems, of

High Wycombe, Buckingham-

shire, wins an award for the

development of a wood pulp

effluent and water recovery

system which eliminates all

discharges.

The system recovers all sus-

pended and dissolved solids in

the form of a dry "cake" which

can be fed into a boiler,

while the liquid is purified for

re-use in the manufacturing

process.

The fifth award goes to Zeneca

Metal Extraction Products,

of Blackley, Manchester, for

the development of a new mag-

nesium-based process used to

manufacture a chemical for

extracting copper from waste

ore.

The new technology is

claimed to reduce effluent com-

ponents by some 85 per cent.

Almost all its business is for

export, and the combined earn-

ings of product sales and devel-

opment projects have more

than doubled over three years.

Its main markets are in Amer-

ica and Western Europe.



Reaching for the sky: British Aerospace has been rewarded for its work on the Airbus. Its exports have almost doubled over the past three years

port to win one is a great achievement."

A more predictable winner is British Aerospace for its work on the Airbus, the most successful European co-operation in building passenger planes. The Airbus began life as a twin-engined aircraft with limited range, but a series of models is now being built, including the four-engined A340-500 with a range of 9,000 miles.

James Barrett, the deputy

chairman, says that

while BA remains its

largest customer, the

Queen's Award pro-

vides national recogni-

tion for "making

this a global business

with global reach."

Passenger safety

might be the company's main concern,

but passenger comfort

is the prime reason

for the success of

John Horsfall & Sons

of Halifax, which

wins the award for the

second year running.

The company, founded

in 1863 to make blankets, car-

ried on business successfully

until the 1970s when the popu-

larity of duvets undermined

the market. It moved on to pro-

viding blankets for the airline

industry.

The airline business has

grown until it has become the

most important for us," says

Peter Benson, the managing

director.

"We make everything from a

very economic flame-

retardant mod-acrylic blanket

to the most luxurious lambs-

wool ones, as well as head-

rests, pillows and duvets for

first-class sleeping cabins."

Completing the list of avia-

tion winners is Druck of

Groby, Leicestershire, that

makes products ranging from

pressure sensors through to

sophisticated aircraft ground-

support equipment.

The company exports to

more than 60 countries and

has won important contracts

from the US Army and Navy

for test sets used to calibrate

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Drink a toast to a tartan success story

Scotland's food and drink producers have done the nation proud, writes John Young

There is a distinctly Scottish flavour to this year's awards in the food and drink sector, with four of the six winners coming from north of the border.

Nestling among the famous Speyside distilleries is a bakery established by Joseph Walker just over 100 years ago to serve the needs of the village, which has since grown to be the country's leading manufacturer of shortbread.

Although it is still jointly run as a family business by the founder's three grandchildren, James, Joseph and Marjorie, it employs about 600 staff and exports nearly half its annual output of some 10,000 tonnes to more than 60 countries, including America, Australia, France, Chile and Russia.

This is its third export award, following successes in 1984 and 1988. "It is a reflection on everyone in the company from the shop floor up, and we think it is rather special because it is rare for a bakery to win an award twice, let alone three times," says James Walker.

The firm also markets a range of Duchy Original biscuits made from organic wheat and oats harvested on the Prince of Wales's Home Farm at Highgrove.

Another family firm, MacDuff Shellfish, of Aberdeenshire, wins an award for the first time. Exports from its two factories, both of which have won awards from the Sea Fish Industry Authority, have more than doubled in the past three years.

Its main markets are France and, increasingly, Portugal, Spain and Germany. Principal products are langoustines, scallops and crabs, all caught in local waters and supplied to supermarkets, wholesale groups

and specialist traders. "Selling to the French has been quite difficult," says John Beaton, the managing director.

One of the two English companies on the prize list is Dorset Cereals, of Dorchester, which is winning an award for the first time. Founded only ten years ago, the company exports high-fibre breakfast foods and mueslis to 47 countries in Europe, the Middle East, the Far East, North America and the Caribbean, in total accounting for half its sales.

It has exhibited at international food fairs in London, Germany and Russia, and works with the Department of Trade and Industry to promote language learning for business.

Shellfish from Scots waters go to Spain, France and Portugal

Scotch whisky has long been a significant contributor to Britain's export trade, and two of the best known malts are included in this year's awards.

The Macallan Distillers, of Craigellachie, Banffshire, has been honoured for the fourth time. Between August 1996 and August 1998 exports rose from 54 per cent to 61 per cent of total turnover, despite intense competition in the luxury market.

Glenmorangie plc, of West Lothian, which exports to more than 100 countries, wins its first award.

Although Britain is not yet a significant producer of wine, the well-established merchants Corney & Barrow, in the City of London, have won a second successive export award as a broker of fine and rare wines imported mainly from France and sold on to other countries.

Much of the wine comes from private customers' reserves which have been stored in the firm's cellars since they were first shipped.



First-time award winner for exports: Glenmorangie chairman Geoffrey Maddrell has a celebratory dram inside the company's warehouse bottling plant in Broxburn, Scotland

Worldwide demand for English law and courts boosts invisible exports

London's importance as an international financial and legal centre has helped two large City law firms to win awards for exports. They are Allen & Overy with more than 1,500 staff and Norton Rose with about 1,200.

In the past ten years several London law firms, like their foreign counterparts, have become more internationally minded and there are now half a dozen leading British firms that practise all over the world.

Allen & Overy has 20 offices that practise local law in many countries, but Bill Tudor John, the senior partner, says: "British invisible exports, of which law is one, are an important earner for the country and law firms are quite significant contributors to export earnings. English law has become a highly exportable product. Many international contracts between foreign partners will specify English law and English courts because there is an enormous respect for the impartiality of our judiciary."

Mr Tudor John adds: "We doubled the size of our firm in the past five years and that growth has been mainly overseas."

"When I took over as head of the firm in 1994 only 7 per cent of our people were based outside the UK. Now it is 34 per cent and within a short time, probably two years, more than half our lawyers will be based abroad."

Formed in 1930, Allen & Overy provides legal advice to businesses, financial institutions, governments and individuals on banking, corpo-

rate matters, international capital markets, litigation, tax, employment and pensions.

Export earnings come from all over the world, but the biggest markets are where the financial centres are in Europe, North America and Asia.

Allen & Overy has been advising financial institutions on their preparations for European economic and monetary union.

Mr Tudor John says European monetary union will bring more export gains for British law firms

even while the country stays outside the system. He believes it will encourage cross-border mergers and acquisitions, an area in which British law firms have experience and expertise. In anticipation, Allen & Overy plans to expand its presence in Paris and Frankfurt.

Norton Rose has been trading for more than 200 years and acts for international groups including sovereign states, banks and other financial institutions.

Senior partner David Lewis says: "This award comes at the end of a

record year in which we have opened three new offices in Athens, Prague and Bangkok.

"We have always had a strong international client base. However, the rate at which our international work has grown recently is staggering. Over the last three years our London office has more than doubled the value of work conducted outside the UK. This work now represents more than 40 per cent of its business."

Work includes advising on shipping, oil and gas financing, cargo claims, aircraft leasing, project finance, privatisation, cross-border mergers, property and international tax issues.

Recent achievements include advising Texas Utilities in defeating US rival PacifiCorp in the bidding war for The Energy Group, the UK utility; privatisation of the Romanian shipping industry; and the Bang Po power project in Thailand.

RODNEY HOBSON

A PROUD MOMENT



THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR EXPORT ACHIEVEMENT

We know it is unusual for a law firm to be presented with the Queen's Award for Export Achievement and that makes us especially proud to receive it.

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The partners and staff in our offices throughout the world whose knowledge and dedication have made us a premier international law firm.

And, of course, our ever-growing number of clients without whose support and loyalty this could not have been achieved.

Their success is a measure of our success.

In accepting the award we thank you all.



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This year it heralds the development of a novel dry powder inhaler which treats asthma patients in many countries.

Now with a tenth award under our belt we mean to push ahead, in our continuing quest to keep people healthy all over the world.

RUGBY UNION

Moneymen confident clubs can halt losses

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND'S two most successful clubs, the East Midlands and Leicester, will make substantial losses this season but both remain optimistic that the worst is over. Indeed next season, with Europe on the horizon, both believe they can, at worst, break even.

Leicester, who are within three points of the title, will lose in excess of £500,000 this season while Northampton, whose second place is the highest that they have achieved in the Premiership, will lose £1.7 million. These are clubs with a formidable following, so the losses facing the less successful can easily be imagined.

"We took a calculated decision and last year I spent an extra £500,000 so that Ian McGeechan [the director of rugby] could have what he wanted,"

Keith Barwell, the Northampton chairman, said. "But Europe will be worth perhaps another £700,000, we will reduce the players' wage bill by about £500,000 and I'm rather hoping that the excitement of the

World Cup and Europe plus our own commercial nous will mean that next season we lose between nothing and £500,000. If I desperately wanted to, I could go into the black."

Preparations for this season were severely impaired by the inability of the leading clubs to produce a fixture list for members and sponsors, causing financial chaos. Hard lessons have been learnt and Barwell and Peter Tom, his Leicester counterpart, hope that the board meeting next Tuesday of English First-Division Rugby will produce a formula for 1999-2000, in particular a credible means of conducting club rugby before and during the World Cup.

Both men have considerable

personal fortunes but where Barwell has chosen to fund directly Northampton's rise, Tom has brought business acumen to bear on a club that has traditionally relied on the city's commercial leaders.

"I'm been in a position where, in an emergency, I could help out because some of my best moments were spent playing for Leicester," Tom said. "But I think the departure from the scene of Sir John Hall and Ashley Levett, which may have created difficulties for Newcastle and Richmond, has helped to restore reality."

All England's clubs have agreed the imposition of a salary cap of £1.5 million next season but there is also a continued debate over the number of clubs that will be competing at the highest level. If rumoured mergers take place, the number of clubs in the first division could be reduced from 14 to 12, which would affect the distribution of cash from television fees.

"I'm delighted that the clubs are back in Europe and that there seems to be peace between the International Board, the Rugby Football Union and the clubs," Barwell said. "There are still some tricky things to be resolved, notably the great mass of fixtures scheduled, which could very well necessitate some short-term contracts for players. I expect to lose ten players to the United Cricket Board in Cape Town that overlooks a golf course."

Woolmer, who is to be succeeded as the South Africa coach after the World Cup by Graham Ford, the Natal coach, who was his assistant on the recent tour to New Zealand, is also having discussions with Channel 4 over joining its commentary team for the subsequent Test series between England and New Zealand. In addition to his plans in Cape Town, he will be discussing his future with the United Cricket Board of South Africa after the World Cup.

"My relationship with Ali Bacher has not deteriorated and there would be a loyalty factor involved if I wanted to coach another country," Woolmer said. "I also need a sabbatical, so if I do return to Warwickshire, it will not be at

least until next March. The ECB has not made me an offer and I do not know if it can wait that long."



FATHER TIMES

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Numbers game

An innovation this season is the numbering of players' shirts, which is not without its complications. England, for example, are refusing to use No 13 in the World Cup and there was much confusion in the CGU National League match at the Riverside last weekend. Durham's score-board operator had Mark Butcher of Surrey, down as No 9, in the match, programme. Butcher, whose squad number is one, was No 3 and he batted with 12 on his back.

Plane service

The new media centre at Lord's, which will be unveiled

officially next week, will have its uses. Often likened to an object from outer space, it will actually have more in common with conventional aircraft. Pilots coming in off Bovingdon Hold, one of four holding positions for planes approaching Heathrow, will be using it as a reference point.

"Obviously it will not be of practical use in poor visibility and hence will not be an official reporting point," a spokesman for the Civil Aviation Authority said, "but it will be a landmark for planes in the same way that the Canary Wharf tower and Wembley Stadium are at the moment."

Backing women

The effervescent Frances Edmonds, the famous cricket



Edmonds: letting go another teasing delivery

ing author, is to be proposed for membership of MCC by her husband, Phil, the new chairman of Middlesex. Will she be seconded — or perhaps blackballed — by Mike Gatting, whom she once liked in a plumb?

"I also want to put Alexandra, my daughter, down for membership, but she is a little young," Edmonds, the former Middlesex and England all-rounder, said. "I encourage ladies to join the golf club and hotel I am developing in Kent, so, although there are occasions when men want to be on their own, I am all for women in the Long Room, too."

Art form

A two-day ECB seminar for coaches in Birmingham, starting on June 1, will include sessions on taichi, a form of martial arts that is thought to help batsmen by examining the "nature of movement, balance and breathing". And cricket is supposed to be played in the mind.

□ Cricket followers who would like to attend the fund-raising match for Winston Davis, the former West Indies bowler who is now a tetraplegic, at Finedon, Northamptonshire, on May 23, should contact Melanie Henson on 01933 682440.

IVO TENNANT

Cork seeks to settle future with England

BY RICHARD HOBSON

DOMINIC CORK wants an assurance from the England selectors that he has a future in international cricket after being omitted from the World Cup squad this summer. The Derbyshire captain denied that disruptions at the county affected his form during the Ashes tour last winter and said he was fed-up with the perception of being a poor team man.

"I am sick of hearing that Dominic Cork is a big spoilt brat when I am not," he said. "I am not in the England side at the moment because I am seen as not being good enough. But shouldn't I have been told that? If I have had my day at international level, then can somebody tell me."

"I do not want to bleed my lungs every day when there is no chance of playing for England because that is what everybody strives for. I heard that David Graveney [the chairman of selectors] was coming to talk to me, but that has not happened, and my mobile phone has been on all the time."

Cork, 27, was England's leading wicket-taker in the last World Cup and was chosen originally as a specialist one-day player. "I am not asking for people to feel sorry for me. I have had a hard deal, but I know I am capable of winning matches because I have done it before," he said.

"As for being selfish, I have video tapes of me bowling with a groin strain, with the nails ripped off my toes and blood coming out of my feet. I am not the only person who has played through the pain barrier for my country — but what for? For nobody to say we will help you or stick by you?"

Cork said that his threat to resign as Derbyshire captain did not spring from a wish to take overall control of the county. "All I wanted was a group of people working in the same direction. It was never about ultimate power, I am not a megalomaniac. The idea that Dominic Cork is running the club is absolute rubbish," he said.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Simpson to return for Wembley cup final

■ RUGBY LEAGUE: Robbie Simpson will miss the London Broncos' JJB Super League game at home to Warrington Wolves on Saturday, but will be available for the Silk Cut Challenge Cup final on May 1. The Rugby Football League disciplinary committee yesterday suspended the second-row forward for one match and fined him £250 for a reckless high tackle during the defeat by Wakefield Trinity last Sunday.

■ BASKETBALL: Bob Donewald, the controversial coach of Derby Storm, who discovered yesterday that the club were not renewing his contract, will hardly be dismayed by the decision. Less than a week ago, after Derby's exit from the Budweiser Championship play-offs, Donewald, who has been banned for five games and presided over a squad involved in the worst brawl in British basketball's history at Chester 11 weeks ago, admitted: "It's time to move on."

■ REAL TENNIS: Kate Leeming, of Australia, survived a testing struggle against Clare Southwell of Great Britain, in the opening round of the Guy Salmon women's world championship at Hampton Court. Leeming, the No 8 seed, retrieved well and produced a string of unreturnable services. Sally Jones, the No 5 seed and former world champion, beat Christine Amies, of France.

■ SQUASH: Michelle Martin, of Australia, the world No 1, got herself into top gear on Monday evening to secure her fifth leading title on the international tour. She beat Carol Owens, her compatriot, 9-4, 9-7, 9-4 in the final of the WISPA World Grand Prix play-offs in Hurghada, Egypt.

■ CYCLING: Harrods was confirmed yesterday as the third trade team from Britain in the seven-day ProTour, which starts in London on May 23. The tour ends in Edinburgh after a 730-mile route through England, Wales and Scotland.

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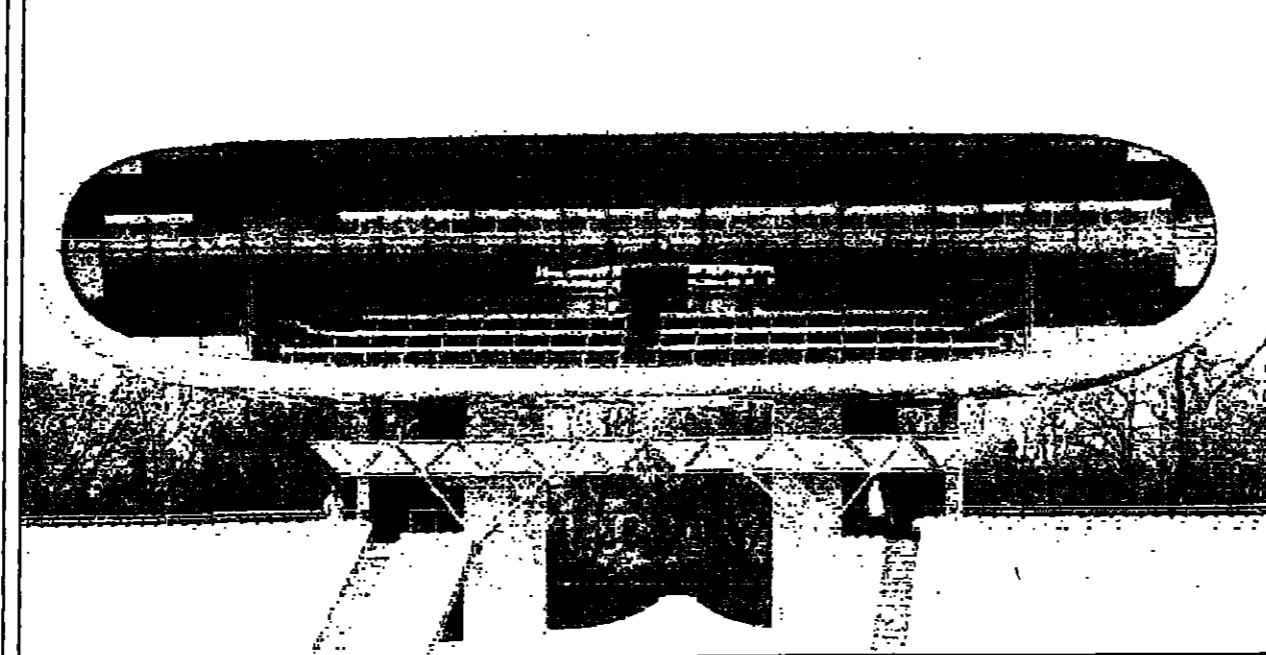
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Navigational beacon: the new media centre at Lord's will offer a reference point for pilots approaching Heathrow

Woolmer's career prepares to take an academic turn



FATHER TIMES

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Plane service

The new media centre at Lord's, which will be unveiled

SAILING

Robertson pursues Olympic dream

FROM EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT
IN HYERES

SHIRLEY ROBERTSON has been sailing the tiny single-handed racing dinghy for a very long time, yet her determination to achieve an Olympic medal in a class that has provided her with as much heartache as glory over the years remains undimmed.

Yesterday she completed a satisfactory opening phase to the defence of her title at the Olympic Classes Regatta on the Côte d'Azur with her sixth successive top-ten finish to take her comfortably into the elite "gold fleet" for the final stages of the championship.

After a lay-off since the class world championships at Melbourne in January, when she was third, Robertson has arrived here more relaxed than normal and apparently the better for it. "I think I'm a more consistent sailor," the two-time Olympian who finished fourth at the Atlanta Games regatta at Savannah, said. "My sailing skills have improved tremendously — it's partly down to getting a bit older and partly down to the match-racing I've been doing recently."

But Robertson, who now 30 and one of the oldest in the class, is going to have a tough fight on her hands to finish in the top three this week. Among her main rivals are the two Holland women, who occupy the top two places in the world rankings, Margriet Matthyssen, who has scored five firsts, and Carolin Brouwer, who has been consistently in the top ten.

In the Laser class, Ben Ainslie is having an unusual championships with capsizes in three races affecting his scoring. In the first race yesterday, the world No 1 and Olympic silver medal-winner was rammed by the jury boat just before the start and found himself head-to-wind as the gun went off. He recovered to finish third, but a disappointing thirteenth in race two leaves him in eighth place overall.

Garcia earns his promotion

From Mel Webb
in Barcelona

IT WAS just a practice round, but what a cast. And what a finish. Three men and a boy, and the boy upstaged the lot of them. Today, Sergio Garcia will play his first round as a professional in the pro-am on the eve of the Spanish Open at El Prat and the eyes of golfing Spain — the golfing world, even — will be on him. But yesterday there was time for a spot of relaxation with a trio of famous compatriots and he helped the greatest one of them all to win the money.

Garcia, 19, was playing with Severiano Ballesteros against Jose Maria Olazabal and Miguel Angel Jimenez and to most young men of his age, playing with two Masters

champions and a Ryder Cup vice-captain would have induced them to quivering incompetence.

Not this boy, not the one they call "El Nino". As the four approached the last green he was laughing and joking with the others, even though he had missed the green.

No matter. Garcia walked to his ball, sized up the shot and, from 50 feet and more, chipped. In, at the last roll. Garcia exchanged a mildly

jubilant high five with Ballesteros and walked off, his last round of golf as an amateur completed.

The incident, if not the situation, took the mind back to another young man chipping in with the last amateur stroke of his life. Garcia will be hoping to make a better start than Justin Rose and Ballesteros, for one, was bullish about the young pretender's chances.

"I predict that he will have a great career and that one day he will be a Masters champion," he said. "My message to him is to say 'no' as many times as he can. He must not listen to anybody else — he should be Sergio Garcia always."

4.20 PARTY HAS STARTED MURRAYSHALL HOTEL MAIDEN HURDLE (Div I: 2,580; 2m 41 110yd) (12 runners)

ROB WRIGHT 3.50 High In The Clouds 4.25 Plumbob 4.55 Begorat 5.25 Mick McCann GOING: GOOD TO SOFT SIS

1 3542 CHOICE CUT 16 T Coddell 6-1-7 R Johnson 2 3229 FORESTAL 24 (D.G.S) 18 D. Johnson 6-1-7 R Johnson 3 4001 GIFTED GERTY 13 (D.G.S) 18 D. Johnson 6-1-7 R Johnson 4 2642 LUCKY MASTER 16 J Jones 7-1-7 R Johnson 5 4002 TURKISH TOWER 26 (D.G.S) 18 D. Johnson 6-1-7 R Johnson 6 2225 NORTHSTAR 15 (D.G.S) 18 D. Johnson 6-1-7 R Johnson 7 5212 THE HILL HAS MOVED 9 (D.G.S) 18 D. Johnson 6-1-7 R McDonnell 8 2009 THE THIRTEEN 9 (D.G.S) 18 D. McDonnell 6-1-7 R McDonnell 9 10332 SILLYHORSE 40 (D.S) P. M. Johnson 6-1-7 R. McCormick 10 11009 TURKISH TOWER 26 (D.G.S) 18 D. Thompson 6-1-7 R. Thompson 11 0009 TURKISH TOWER 26 (D.G.S) 18 D. Thompson 6-1-7 R. Thompson 12 4 SON OF SKELETON 15 (D.G.S) 18 D. Thompson 6-1-7 R. Thompson 13 0001 TURKISH TOWER 26 (D.G.S) 18 D. Thompson 6-1-7 R. Thompson 14 31 Choice Cut 2-2 The Hill Has Moved 4-4 Northstar 10-12 Lucky Master, 12-12 Sillyhorse, 25-1 Thunderhead, 12-12 Magician, 25-1 another teasing delivery

1 3122 TROUBLE AHEAD 26 (D.G.S) 18 D. Bailey 6-1-7 R. Williamson 2 2221 HIGH IN THE CLOUDS 28 (D.G.S) 18 D. Bailey 6-1-7 R. Williamson 3 1736 STASH THE CASH 23 (F.G.S) M. Hammond 6-1-7 R. Hardinge 4 1804 TURKISH TOWER 26 (D.G.S) 18 D. Johnson 6-1-7 R. Johnson 5 6-04 JUST NEIL 13 (D.G.S) 18 D. Johnson 6-1-7 R. Johnson 6 46422 TURKISH TOWER 16 (D.G.S) R. Nixon 6-1-3 R. Taylor 4-5 Trade Ahead 2-1 High In The Clouds, 12-12 others

4-5 Trade Ahead 2-1 High In The Clouds, 12-12 Stash The Cash, 12-12 others

4-5 Trade Ahead 2-1 High In The Clouds, 12-12 others

4-5 Trade Ahead 2-1 High In The Clouds, 12-12 others

4-5 Trade Ahead 2-1 High In The Clouds,

Simpson
return for
Wembley
cup final

■ RUGBY LEAGUE

■ BASKETBALL

■ REAL TENNIS

■ SWIMMING

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY APRIL 21 1999

RACING: LEADING JOCKEY RETURNS TO THE SADDLE AFTER ESCAPING JAIL SENTENCE

Williamson revels in freedom

By ALAN LEE
RACING CORRESPONDENT

NORMAN WILLIAMSON finished a tailed-off last on his first ride at Chepstow yesterday and returned caked in mud. The weather was foul, the racing mediocre but Williamson was pleased to be there, relieved to be free to be there. For a man who might have spent the remaining big days of the jumps season in jail, he suddenly has a lot to look forward to.

At Gloucester magistrates court on Monday, Williamson was described as "full of remorse and embarrassment" about the drink-driving offence that, it was said by the court chairman, escaped a prison sentence "by a whisker". The memory plainly made him uncomfortable yesterday but, after two months of anxiety, at least he can now make his plans with confidence.

In the short term, these involve the enviable ride on Betty's Boy, for Kim Bailey, in the Whitbread Gold Cup at Sandown on Saturday, and a reunion with Diren Route — an impressive winner at Aintree — in the BMW Chase at Punchestown next Tuesday. The 30-year-old also has some good rides at the Perth festival, which begins today.

"I am just glad the ordeal is over," Williamson said of his court case. "It could have been a lot worse — I might have hit somebody — and I knew there was a chance I could go to prison. We all do silly things sometimes. It was a lesson to me and I'm glad to be back riding."

This has been a season of sensitive decisions for Williamson, whose principal stables have frequently clashed. He



Senor El Betrucci will be ridden by Mick Fitzgerald in the Whitbread Gold Cup on Saturday

confirmed that he is set to partner Betty's Boy, one of two Bailey runners in the Whitbread, ahead of either General Wolfe or The Outback Way for Venetia Williams.

Victory for Betty's Boy, a late defector from the Grand National, would give a late

filip to Bailey, unusually low in the trainers' list with only 34 winners. "It's been a season I would wish to forget," Bailey said with feeling yesterday.

Betty's Boy looked like being very special in his novice days but he has been a hard horse to train and he's had a

lot of leg problems. He's been fine since winning at Cheltenham, though, and he will only be 4lb out of the handicap at Sandown, so we've got to be hopeful."

Whitbread, whose other runner Cariboo Gold will be ridden by Rupert Walden,

hopes for drier weather up to the weekend, it may take another deluge to persuade Williamson to run General Wolfe. "I can't say if he runs at the moment but it will partly be down to the ground," he said yesterday.

Susan Nock, the Gloucestershire permit holder, has expressed her dismay at the suspension of Graham Bradby's licence but she has now obtained a suitable substitute for her stable star, Senor El Betrucci. "I have been offered Mick Fitzgerald for the Whitbread and I'm very happy with that," Mrs Nock said.

Richard Dunwoody will partner Nathaniel Lad, potentially Jenny Pitman's last big winner before retirement, while Adrian Maguire, who won the race on Call It A Day last season, is likely to ride Major Bell for Alastair Whillans. "We have an alternative at Perth on Friday but I am favouring Sandown," Whillans said.

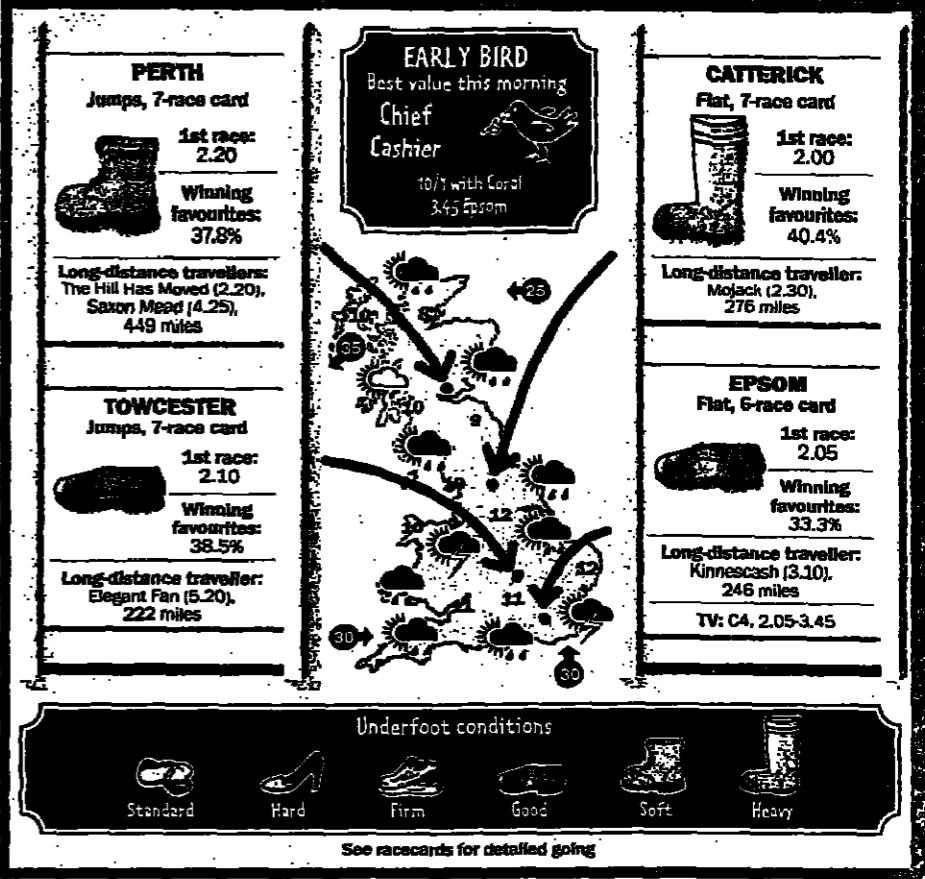
Tony McCoy, who will probably ride Jathib ahead of Martin Pipe's other runner, Cyborgo, already has his jockey's title in safe keeping but he shows no sign of easing up. His win on Belmontbruno yesterday rates as one of the strongest, most persistent rides of the season.

Away from the racecourse board yesterday described the suggestion that there will be 18 consecutive racing Sundays next year as "speculation". It is, however, certainly their intention to maximise the potential of summer Sundays and, from the viewpoint of attracting new and younger racegoers, not before time. Unlike Williamson, few would have chosen to be at Chepstow yesterday.

TONY MCCOY, who will probably ride Jathib ahead of Martin Pipe's other runner, Cyborgo, already has his jockey's title in safe keeping but he shows no sign of easing up. His win on Belmontbruno yesterday rates as one of the strongest, most persistent rides of the season.

MEETING POINTS

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE GOING TODAY



3.30 MOONAK HANDICAP (25,004-1m 3f 21 ayd) (12)

1 (1) 40-2 ARABIAN'S PET 21 (G.D.G) Mrs J Revelle 6-9-10
2 (2) 002 CRYSTAL FAULZ 21 (G.F.G) T Eccles 6-9-10
3 (3) 215 FLUJAL 21 (G.D.G) Ms A Suckling 6-9-7
4 (4) 30-2 BOLWELL RAYZ 16 (G.D.G) G Duffield 6-9-7
5 (5) 003 HOUSE OF DREAMS 15 (G.D.G) G Duffield 6-9-7
6 (6) 004 DASHING DANCER 16 (G.D.G) J Egan 6-9-7
7 (7) 004 ALDYNCH BURR 14 (G.D.G) M A Radnor 6-9-7
8 (8) 011 THE PRESENT 14 (1) Mr C Delevi 6-8-7
9 (9) 002 MASTA LA VISTA 2 (G.D.G) M W Eastley 9-8-7
10 (10) 003 TROUSSEAU 14 (G.D.G) Mr C Delevi 9-8-7
11 (11) 002 TREASURE ISLAND 44 (G.D.G) F Murphy 4-8-7
12 (12) 003 SAN MICHEL 11 (G.D.G) J Egan 7-8-7
13 (13) 004 PIZZOLI CATINO 149 (G.D.G) Mrs J Revelle 4-8-2
14 (14) 005 TROUSSEAU 14 (G.D.G) Mrs J Revelle 4-8-2
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MAY

Climax to Premiership season
8 exclusively live matches
Sky Sports 1 and 5



JUNE

Cricket World Cup Semi's & Final
Sky Sports 1



JULY

England v New Zealand 1st Test
Sky Sports 1



AUGUST

Charity Shield plus start of the Football Season
Sky Sports 1, 2 and 3



SEPTEMBER

US v Europe Ryder Cup Golf
Sky Sports 1



OCTOBER

Super League Grand Final live from Old Trafford
Sky Sports 1



NOVEMBER

European Tour Golf Johnnie Walker Classic
Sky Sports 1 and 3



DECEMBER

South Africa v England 2nd & 3rd Tests
Sky Sports 2



JANUARY

FA Cup Rounds 4 & 5
Sky Sports 2



FEBRUARY

6 Nations Rugby Union England v Ireland
Sky Sports 2



SPORTS 1

SPORTS 2 *

SPORTS 3

SPORTS *

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Schmeichel leads from the back

MIDWEEK VIEW



SIMON BARNES
Sports Feature Writer
of the Year



Diving force: Schmeichel shows the reflexes and awareness that keep him and Manchester United at the top of the game

Over the past eight years, he has been the best, the most consistent, the most influential player in the FA Carling Premiership. He has also been undervalued, underappreciated, misunderstood: but the hell with that. If people were to start understanding goalkeepers, the goalkeepers would have to find something else to do.

They give the awards to the outfield players, to the goal-scorers, and that is part of the way things are. A goalkeeper understands that and accepts it. His reward is the private knowledge of his own lonely contribution and the certainty that he is the one to be blamed when things next go wrong. Goalkeeper is not the position for a well-adjusted person.

If there was a moment when a season seemed to stop and turn on a sixpence, though, it was when Peter Schmeichel made that penalty save from Dennis Bergkamp last week, as Manchester United beat Arsenal in the FA Cup. A penalty save is the one fear for which a goalkeeper wins lavish praise and Schmeichel is the first to say that there is always a good deal of luck involved.

The fact, though, is that Schmeichel beat Bergkamp at football's great game of paper-scissors-stone. Intuition, homework and his own strength will make the save happen: Schmeichel's correct guess, Bergkamp's placing the ball at the height that Schmeichel wanted.

Students of the goalkeeper's art know the save in the same match from Ronny Johnson's inadvertent deflection was, technically, a great deal harder. But in the drama of the penalty save, a goalkeeper, for once, is centre stage for something other than an error. The save told the team that the force was with them and Ryan Giggs's goal was a great

player's response to the massive contribution of his better.

Schmeichel's work this season has been all the more admirable for his indifferent form at the season's start. For most players, a run of poor form is mostly a private matter. A goalkeeper, by definition, is the lonely individual in a team game, yet his own poor form affects every other person in the side in the most direct fashion possible.

A striker who misses an open goal is embarrassed, but a goalkeeper who makes an error that leads to a goal is humiliated. A striker might get a second chance to score: a goalkeeper never gets a second chance to save it. Is the difference between a sin of omission and a sin of commission? A goalkeeper's errors are always in the second, more heinous category.

Schmeichel, though, turned his poor form around. His achievements, particularly in the European games — the

focus for Manchester United's most frenzied efforts — have been majestic, notably in the two matches against Internazionale and in the first against Juventus. He will need all that form and more, one suspects, in the second match against Juventus tonight.

Manchester United have been the dominant force in English football over the past

rarely have I known this moment myself, in my own goalkeeping days, smallest of small-time. And yet I shall never forget it, for it is one of the most intoxicating feelings in football. I can remember just one or two moments of seeing a striker come towards me with every advantage and seeing him all of a sudden look helpless, giving up before he

accused Peter Shilton of selling dummies to strikers. Shilton denied this. "But perhaps it seems like that to the striker." Schmeichel's ability also works in this impossibly rarefied way.

At its best, his talent is pre-emptive: the save is made before the shot is released. The save is the last resort, the third line of defence. The first is his vision and his command over the defenders in front of him, the second his own positioning and movement.

Many of the saves have been brilliant, but that is the fire-brigade stuff. His fire prevention is every bit as important and what he prides himself on most. Schmeichel leaves Manchester United at the end of the season. This will give great sorrow to all those who love the high and lonely art of the goalkeeper. He was never once made footballer of the year, as he should have been. He gets my vote of footballer of the decade instead.

Record of Foulkes is ready to be broken

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

PETER SCHMEICHEL will equal Bill Foulkes's record of 35 European Cup appearances when he lines up against Juventus in the semi-final, second leg in Turin tonight. The Denmark goalkeeper knows that, barring accidents, he will overtake the centre half's mark if Manchester United are victorious, but believes that, in any case, he will be soon overtaken.

Schmeichel has already surpassed Alex Stepney's record of 174 clean sheets for United, but even if United reach the final he feels that he would not hold the record outright for long, because Denis Irwin has made just two fewer appearances and Gary Neville three.

"I'm always happy to set a record and I think all players are," Schmeichel said. "However, at most I can only play two more European Cup matches for Manchester United, including this one, and I've got players like Gary Neville and David Beckham right behind me. So I would say that this record is just on loan."

Schmeichel retains a sense of modesty about such issues and does not believe that he deserves to be compared with one of the leading lights of United's 1968 European Cup-winning side.

"You can't compare me with him and what we have done for Manchester United, because in his time it took many successful seasons to play that many games in the European Cup," he said.

"Nowadays, when you qualify for the Champions' League, you are guaranteed six matches in the group stages. So, in that way, it has been easier for me to match his number of games."

Schmeichel, who is leaving Old Trafford in the summer because of the demands of the English game, claims that he is coping well with the club's hectic run-in. He has fully recovered from his groin injury and claims that he could have played in the 3-0 victory over Sheffield Wednesday last Saturday that kept United at the top of the FA Carling Premiership.

"I could have played if Alex Ferguson had wanted me to and I'm ready for Juventus," he said.

Man in van with sporting world at his fingertips

Russell Kempson goes behind the scenes on a big night for ITV

Roger Philcox squeezes his portly frame into a swirl chair in the back of the darkened van at Old Trafford. A bank of screens flickers in front of him. Geneva centre-praties away and New York is calling. Philcox twiddles a few knobs, chats back and takes stock, the world at his fingertips.

"We might not be the hosts, but problems can still arise," Philcox said. "We'll have a strange power supply and will need our own satellite uplink."

Philcox travelled to Turin yesterday among the advance guard of five vans and 40 personnel. ITV2, the fledgeling digital channel, also has to be catered for and also has to be showing live Bayern Munich against Dynamo Kiev as it irons out the glitches before its shared coverage of the rugby union World Cup this year.

Philcox, 59, is ITV's technical producer, the man who ensures that sport's finest spectacles are transmitted without hitch to the pubs, clubs and living rooms of little England. "Our lords and masters buy the events," he said. "It's up to me to make sure the sound and pictures, from wherever in the world, get back to them. If we have to apologise for loss of either, I'm a failure."

With ITV the host broadcaster for the first leg of the European Cup semi-final between Manchester United and Juventus two weeks ago, about 60 countries, from Australia to Cyprus, took the live feed from 16 match cameras and in 30 languages. The Swiss-German

commentator may have fluffed his pre-match lines, his Russian counterpart mysteriously never made it to Old Trafford and Yugoslav TV, predictably, had "operational" difficulties, but still went wrong. Tonight, for the second leg, a similar outcome is expected.

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Fowler to miss England's trip to Budapest

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

ROBBIE FOWLER'S season took another turn for the worse yesterday when it was announced that he would be unavailable for England's match against Hungary in Budapest next Wednesday. The Liverpool striker needs surgery to reset his broken nose, an injury sustained in an incident in a Liverpool hotel last weekend.

Fowler's domestic campaign has already ended, for after the 1-0 home defeat by Aston Villa on Saturday he began a six-match suspension, imposed by the Football Association, for his antics in matches against Chelsea and Everton.

At Stamford Bridge, he questioned the sexuality of Graeme Le Saux, the Chelsea defender, with a series of bizarre taunts. In the Merseyside derby at Anfield, he celebrated scoring a goal by stooping to "sniff" the white lines on the pitch. He was fined by his club and the FA also ordered him to pay a fine of £32,000.

Kevin Keegan, the England coach, had been expected to name Fowler in his party, especially as his options up front may be limited. When he announces his squad tomorrow, several players from Manchester United and Arsenal are likely to be absent, freed to concentrate on club duties as the FA Carling Premiership title race nears its climax.

If Ruud Gullit, the Newcastle United manager, had his way, Alan Shearer, the England captain, would be absent, too. "I have my own interests to protect," Gullit said yesterday. "If Kevin is willing to let players from the title-chasing clubs stay at home, that's what's the purpose of the game? Players like Alan have had a hard



Fowler: needs operation

World Cup and a hard season and he needs a rest also. I would like to rest him if I could. I would object if Alan was in the squad and players from the other big clubs weren't. It would not be fair.

"I wouldn't consider asking him to pull out, and I'm not making any sort of threat over this, but I can't wait to talk to Kevin. If he had been in charge all year and wanted to use the fixture to bring on some fringe players, then it would be OK, but that's not the case. The reason for the game is to develop his strongest team. If players aren't going to be there, it becomes two-year contract."

Tony Higgins, secretary of the Scottish Professional Footballers' Association, said: "I'm sure that Neil's revelations will accelerate the number of random tests among players. The SFA make an assessment at the end of every season about the number of tests that have been taken. No numbers are made public but I'm certain the procedure will be stepped up."

"I'm sure Neil's case is a special one. However, it would be naive to think that some professional footballers don't take social drugs. Our message is quite clear: if you want to play professional sport, then don't take drugs."

Proposed changes to transfer regulations in the light of the Bosman ruling will not include allowing players or clubs to terminate contracts whenever they choose, Fifa, the world governing body, said yesterday.

"We are looking at the transfer regulations as a whole," a Fifa spokesman, Andreas Herren, said. "Fifa is looking to increase European Union compatibility but does not intend to touch the essence of the contracts. If a contract, out of mutual consent, is to be terminated unilaterally that is something between the parties – Fifa would certainly not institutionalise that."

Rebrov, of Dynamo Kiev, is a key figure in his side's push for victory in the European Cup but may wane as his knee injury bites in the later stages



Rebrov, of Dynamo Kiev, is a key figure in his side's push for victory in the European Cup but may wane as his knee injury bites in the later stages

Kiev insisting they are fit to do battle

BY ROB HUGHES

For Dynamo Kiev, the wait has been even longer than it has for Manchester United.

The champions of Ukraine

have never reached the European Cup final and in Munich tonight, their task

appears monumental after the way Bayern Munich

came back from a 3-1 deficit

to draw the first leg 3-3 in

Kiev.

However, Kiev, who eliminated Real Madrid, the holders, in the quarter-finals, have the quality: if only they can summon the nerve. In Kiev, the home side should have led Munich 5-1. They lost concentration, tired on a heavy pitch and Bayern rallied with typically German spirit. "It's not over," Valeri Lobanovsky, who has been with Kiev for more than 40 years as player and, now, a trainer, growled. "If we can score three times here, we can do it again."

With Andrii Shevchenko

so quick on the ground and

so precise in his finishing – he has netted 17 goals in 26 European Cup games – those are not hollow words, but, if Kiev can lose control once, they can do so again, and Lobanovsky is distinguished by his say he does not fear Munich in their own Olympic Stadium.

As with United, Kiev's test is one of heart and mind and sinew. While Alex Ferguson waits for medical guidance on Ryan Giggs' injured ankle, Kiev weigh up the gamble on the sore knee of Sergei Rebrov. He is the catalyst to Shevchenko and, in the eyes of some observers, Rebrov, with his uncanny ability to think for Shevchenko, is the

temper desire with care. Kiev have already agreed to sell Shevchenko to AC Milan and may feel that this is their best, if not their only, time to conquer the Continent. Again, if he says he does not fear Munich in their own Olympic Stadium.

Rebrov should start the

match come what may. Here, as in Turin, the judgment of the managers is critical.

These are the times when the overambitious among their ilk are tempted to ask key performers to take pain-killing injections.

Once they step over the

line, the players have to

score away from home.

Bayern have 25,000 reasons to concentrate their

minds. That, in pounds sterl

ing, is the bonus that each

player has been offered to

reach the final. Matthäus

may be 38, but the years drop

away when money is on

the table. He is such a winner,

such a leader. "The European Cup is the best and the

harshest competition to win in the world and we want it," he

said yesterday. Matthäus might have added "again" because he has been there before, with Borussia Dortmund.

Otmar Hitzfeld, who is again his mentor, having coached that same Dortmund side to victory in the European Cup two years ago, said: "The 3-3 draw gives us an advantage. Maybe it's 51 per cent to us at this moment, but we must be careful."

Careful and concentrated are the watchwords. Without Bixente Lizarazu, the adventurous France left back, and Giovane Elber, the Brazil striker, Bayern might be two talents short of what it takes to shock Kiev twice in a row.

Their counter-attacking speed suggests that Kiev can upset the odds and win on the break and if Juventus approach the tempo, the thought and the movement of their first hour at Old Trafford in the first leg, a Kiev versus Juventus final is, seemingly, on the cards.

Arsenal are in fine fettle for final furlong

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

IN THE end, they may still not be able to do enough to remove Manchester United's stony grip from the other leading prize that Arsenal might have to hand over to the Old Trafford empire next month.

But Arsène Wenger, Dennis Bergkamp, Patrick Vieira and the rest of North London's finest can look back with pride today on the performance that proved that the Double-winners of last season do not know how to accept second-best.

Overhauled Wimbledon, one of only three sides to beat them in the FA Carling Premiership this season, were devastatingly dispatched 5-1 at Highbury by a vintage show from the now

single-minded Arsenal. Five days after the despair of losing an FA Cup semi-final replay to their great northern foes, the air was filled again with the exaltation of the names of heroes.

Vieira scored the pivotal goal, the second for Arsenal, which sparked a series of four goals in minutes that simply blew away Wimbledon early in the second half.

Between a pair of strikes by Highbury's newest star, Kain – the first officially debited as an own goal, Ben Thatcher, the Wimbledon defender – Bergkamp delivered the moment that he and 38,000 others had hoped and

prayed for. Nigel Winterburn, the left back, combined with Emmanuel Petit to construct a swift thrust that allowed the mercurial Dutchman to shrug off the challenge of Alan Kimble and power his drive beyond Neil Sullivan.

The decibel level reached by the Arsenal fans when chanting his name before the kick-off, in a genuinely touching display of support for a man whose missed penalty in stoppage time at Villa Park had left him in the depths of a great depression, was matched by an explosive communal roar.

"We were so happy for Dennis when he scored," Vieira said. "But nobody

ever doubted him. He was very down after the Manchester United match, but we all were and it was important for everybody that we proved again how strong we are."

Arsenal can go top of the Premiership for the first time this season if they win at Middlesbrough on Saturday. United, coming back from Turin, must wait until Sunday to take a crack at Leeds United, who are in fourth place, at Elland Road.

Arsenal visit Leeds on May 11, just six days after a challenging North London derby away to Tottenham Hotspur – on the night when United meet traditionally their fiercest rivals, Liverpool, at Anfield.

Saha suffers Wembley blow

IN BRIEF

Ground, are to receive a £500,000 loan from the Football Trust to help to fund a temporary move to Withdean Stadium. The Goldstone venue needs improvements of £1.4 million.

The Scottish Premier League announced yesterday that the final fixtures of the season will kick-off at 12.30pm on Sunday, May 23. Under the original agreement

12 months ago between the Scottish Premier League and Sky Television,

the matches were scheduled to start at 6.05pm.

■ Sunderland are set for an early test of their FA Carling Premiership credentials when they face Liverpool, who have won the league title a record 18 times, in a match to mark the hundredth Football League championship season. The game will be played at the Stadium of Light on May 18.

■ Christian Worns, 26, the Paris Saint-Germain defender, has signed for Borussia Dortmund, of the Bundesliga, for a fee of £3 million.

Wilkinson defends England's failure

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

HOWARD WILKINSON has insisted that England's disastrous World Youth Cup performance does not mean the country's young footballing talents have fallen behind the rest of the world.

Wilkinson, the Football Association technical director, believes the much-weakened England team that flew out to Nigeria earlier this month did not truly reflect the wealth of potentially world-class young footballers now prospering in the FA Carling Premiership.

England, without young stars such as Michael Owen and Jonathan Woodgate, who were allowed by the FA to stay with their clubs as the English season draws to a climax, failed to score in their three World Youth Cup matches, which all ended in defeat.

It was the worst record of any team in the tournament, but Wilkinson refused to be downcast. "I don't think the England performance in the under-20 championships in Nigeria would be taken by any serious student of the game as an accurate measure of where our young footballers stand in the world," Wilkinson said.

"The team that went out, as opposed to some nations who were out there, would not have been the best performers available to play there."

Wilkinson was speaking after the launch of the Coca-Cola Mini Soccer revolution, inspired by his own Charter for Quality, at Wembley Stadium in London yesterday. The seven-a-side scheme will replace full-size games for all players aged under ten.

7.45pm. 80,000 screaming Italians.

9.45pm. 80,000 screaming Italians.

(Beckham to score first
in 1-0 United triumph:
£20 pays £120.)

JUVENTUS V MAN. UTD.	
TV: Live on TV. Kick-off 7.45pm.	
10/11 JUVENTUS	12/5 MAN. UTD.
First player to score	1-0
to score	2-0 2-1 3-0 3-1
Intzagi	20/1 28/1 35/1 35/1 100/1 66/1
Zidane	28/1 66/1 66/1 175/1 150/1
Coate	50/1 66/1 66/1 175/1 150/1
Davids	50/1 66/1 66/1 175/1 150/1
Di Lilio	100/1 150/1 150/1 325/1 300/1
Deschamps	125/1 175/1 175/1 375/1 350/1
First player to score	1-0 2-0 2-1 3-0 3-1
Yorke	25/1 45/1 35/1 125/1 100/1
Cole	28/1 50/1 45/1 150/1 125/1
Beckham	60/1 100/1 100/1 275/1 250/1
Blomqvist	80/1 150/1 125/1 375/1 325/1
Keane	80/1 150/1 125/1 375/1 325/1
Stam	175/1 300/1 275/1 650/1 550/1

The Scorecast:
Choose the player who'll score first.
Choose the final score. Good luck!

Above Match: Own goals do not count for first player to score.

Extra time does not count. Other rules on request.

These odds have changed since the match was played.

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THE EUROPEAN CUP FINALS

EVS. JUVENTUS 11/5 DRAW MAN UTD 9/4

Stadio delle Alpi. Kick-off 7.45pm, Live on TV.

CORRECT SCORE JUVENTUS 1-0 MAN UTD

2-0 1-1 1-2 1-3 1-4 1-5 1-6 1-7 1-8 1-9 1-10 1-11 1-12 1-13 1-14 1-15 1-16 1-17 1-18 1-19 1-20 1-21 1-22 1-23 1-24 1-25 1-26 1-27 1-28 1-29 1-30

SNOOKER: SIX-TIME WORLD CHAMPION MUST TURN ROUND 7-2 DEFICIT TO SURVIVE

Davis faces early departure

STEVE DAVIS, gracing the Crucible Theatre for the 21st year in succession, must dredge his reserves of determination to avoid immediate and ignominious elimination from the Embassy world championship in Sheffield this morning.

Davis, winner of the title on six occasions between 1980 and 1989, trailed Joe Perry, the world No 74, 7-2 after their opening session. It was reminiscent of the corresponding round in 1981, when Davis was astoundingly beaten 10-1 by Tony Knowles.

It began to go wrong for Davis in the second frame. Leading by 37 with only one red remaining, he kissed the pink into the middle

pocket in trying to escape from a self-imposed snooker. Perry cleared with 33 and salvaged the next, from a 61-0 deficit, with a 66 clearance.

The most startling error from Davis came in the fifth frame. Poised to steal it and reduce his arrears to manageable proportions at 3-2, he missed a straightforward blue to a middle pocket.

By now Perry was aware that Davis, at 41 the oldest competitor in the field, was struggling and piled on the pressure with breaks of 120 and 81 to move within three frames of progress on the resumption.

Motivated by national pride and with a keen sense that an opportunity had presented

BY PHIL YATES

itself to resurrect his ailing career, James Wattana disregarded comparative recent form to defeat Marco Fu in the first round.

Wattana, a former world No 3 who appears destined to be relegated from the elite top 16 in the rankings next season, rediscovered the ability to win under pressure with a 10-8 victory in a game billed as the unofficial Asian championship.

With the exception of the Welsh Open in January, when he reached the quarter-finals, Wattana has found success hard to come by. His frustration was compounded six weeks ago when, shortly before a match against Ken

Doherty in the Thailand Masters, he received an anonymous phone call that instructed him to "lose or be prepared to die". Wattana lost.

In contrast, Fu has made quite an impact in his first full season on the circuit. He was runner-up to Stephen Lee in the Grand Prix, he has climbed from 37th to 39th in the world rankings and has already constructed 30 century breaks in competition.

Consequently, Fu, the first player from Hong Kong to qualify for the Crucible, was the bookmakers' favourite. Indeed, they looked to have correctly assessed form when, after trailing 5-4 overnight, he took the lead for the first time at 8-7.

Mark King will supply the opposition for John Higgins, the title-holder, in the second round, having recovered from 8-6 down to beat Darren Morgan 10-8.

TELEVISION: BBC2, 1.10, 4.00, 6.45, and 9.30pm; BBC1, 2.30pm



Henman reflects on the painful learning process experienced during another defeat on clay in Monte Carlo yesterday

Henman given lean time

THE Monte Carlo Country Club here is one of the homes of tradition on the ATP Tour so it seems a little strange that Tim Henman, that very traditional of British gentlemen, is trying hard to fly in the face of it. One of the sport's great traditions dictates that putting a Briton on a clay court is a recipe for disappointment, if not disaster. After his gruelling defeat by Fernando Meligeni yesterday, Henman begs to differ.

At 28 and ranked no 51, Meligeni is never going to set the world alight, but on his day and on his surface he can grind down even the most confident of opponents. Coming from Brazil, clay is the surface Meligeni likes best. Not the most physically imposing of players — his nickname, Fino, means thin — he is the walk

From Albx Ramsay
Tennis Correspondent
in Monte Carlo

pletely sure that his knees will bend in the right direction. Henman, however, is a new man this year. He has worked long and hard to learn the tricks of the clay-court trade and it is almost paying off.

Henman's problem is as much mental as physical and knowing when to go for the kill in long and protracted rallies does not come easily to him.

"When I want to win a game, that's when I can be a little impatient," he admitted. Whatever the result, a tennis match is still just a game and

ally lost 6-7, 6-4, 7-5 after 2hr 38min. No matter, both he and David Felgate, his coach, believe that his day is not far off.

"I know my game on clay is a hundred times better than it has been," Henman said. "I'm really enjoying the practice and I feel ready to win. I need a few opportunities to come my way and I feel very ready to take them, and so there is no reason why I can't have a good run in some of these tournaments coming up."

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Boris Becker had far more important things on his mind yesterday. He was told on Monday night that his father, Karl-Heinz, had died after a long battle against cancer. "I am very, very sad," Becker said, announcing his withdrawal from the tournament.

"In this difficult situation I want to be close to my family." Andre Agassi was also on the first plane home, suffering from a shoulder injury, while Marcelo Rios looked likely to join him, dropping the first set 6-0 against Andrei Pavel, but he finally squeezed through 0-6, 6-4, 7-6.

Richard Burns, Britain's other leading driver, in a Subaru, was one of three drivers penalised for jump-starting a stage yesterday morning. Makinen, in fifth place, was also punished.

Only rain or mechanical

failure will now stop Bugalski

from making history and winning a round of the world

championship in a kit car.

That prospect has the big

teams in uproar.

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WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 52

DELATORY

(c) Of the nature of a criminal information or accusation. From the Latin *delator* an informer, hated by Tacitus.

ENGIST

(a) To appoint the resting-places or lodgings in a journey. *Ciste* means a resting-place.

ESCRIVAN

(b) A clerk on board a ship, a supercargo. From the Portuguese *escrivado*.

DEGLUBATE

(c) To flay or exoriate. The Latin means to lay. *De* equals off, and *glubere* is to peel.

WINNING MOVE

SOLUTION

1 Rd8+! Bxd8 2 Qd7+ Kf8 3 Qxf7 checkmate

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مكتبة من الأصل

A whole new meaning to fly-on-the-wall

It is heartwarming to see that a contrite BBC — after its insubordination in allowing John Simpson to file reports from Belgrave which Downing Street found offensive — is trying to make amends by helping Gordon Brown to stamp down resurgent house price inflation by the novel means of letting us glimpse Haringey council's environmental health officers at work.

After watching BBC1's new series *A Life Of Grime*, the only people who'll be rushing to make offers on property in this part of North London will be those who are deeply fascinated by exotic wildlife, but who can't be bothered to actually visit London Zoo.

All animal life is here, most of it in the kitchen and under the bath mat. *A Life Of Grime* is the sort of programme that makes you wonder why naturalists struggle in the malarial heat of South American rainforests when they could

uncover as many species of insect life in Tottenham and Hornsey.

It comes as no surprise to discover that this series is made by BBC Bristol: the cockroaches crawling over the tandoori in Tottenham were filmed as if this were a David Attenborough natural history documentary. A tray of raw onions was covered in a cloth harbouring so many bacteria that it would qualify for its own scientific research grant. A pile of poppadoms was speckled with mouse droppings, not black mustard seeds as you hoped. It can't have been purely down to luck that this series is being broadcast after most people will have eaten.

When a health officer emerges from a small council flat housing five dogs and 15 cats, she reports that: "There are dog faeces in the living room. The cats are going bald. There's a flea problem," while her colleague swabs her hands and legs with sufficient antis-

epics to prepare her for surgery. Strangely, the case that should have been the most disquieting was the most heartening. Edmund Trebus, an 81-year-old Polish war veteran who has been living in Crouch End for the past 25 years, has filled all ten square feet of his five-bedroom house and its garden with rubbish. Even the loo is full of it, which means that while some dogs in Haringey are allowed the luxury of pooping indoors, Mr Trebus finds a space in his garden.

Mr Trebus won't let Haringey's health officers clear the garbage. What makes all this encouraging is that if you can survive in such insanitary surroundings to the age of 81, then we needn't waste our money on all those antibacterial sprays they keep advertising on TV.

It used to be journalists who roamed the world giving everyone

the impression that the most important aspect of any story was the fact that they had come to report it. Today TV personalities have taken over this conceit. "Celebrities" now descend on an institution — a leading opera house, a football team, etc — and expect to be allowed not just to find out how it is done, but actually to be allowed to do it, even if this jeopardises the reputation for efficiency/success/

artistic merit that the institution has taken years to polish.

A betting man would wager that the manager of the Taj hotel in Bombay had agreed *only* under sufferance to the request from BBC's Holiday to let David Gower and Rory McGrath serve as butlers to the Taj's VIP guests. This was a man who would sooner eat his own liver than let mice make doo-doo on his poppadoms. So while Gower and McGrath found it amusing that room-service orders were cocked up, each step up stung their new boss like a stab wound. To them it was a jape for a TV show: to him it was his life.

About halfway through their

trial it must have occurred to the two Brits that their behaviour was patronising; or maybe their professionalism got the better of them.

But just as they had stopped acting like goons for the camera, Gower was recognised by some of Bombay's beautiful people —

including former cricketers — who were attending a ritzy publishing party in one of the Taj's suites. They turned Gower into a non-buzzing fellow guest. So, once again, the boss wasn't pleased (but now nor was McGrath). Still, it did whet your appetite for a stay at the Taj — which is presumably why the hotel agreed to the prank in the first place.

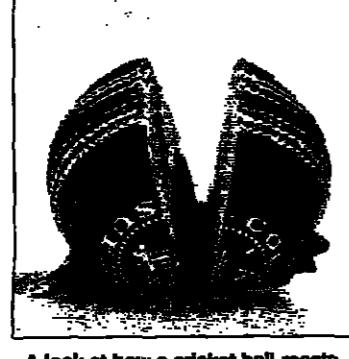
The *Decision* (Channel 4) opened up the social worker's casework on Hayley, a 15-year-old who goes ahead with having a baby against her separating parents' wishes — neither of whom wants anything to do with her. Hayley is no longer with the baby's father, hasn't any money, has no home and is relying on the social services to make her more comfortable. They give her a home — the baby had stopped acting like goons for the camera, Gower was recognised by some of Bombay's beautiful people —

children and their social workers — doesn't seek to nudge you into wondering why taxpayers should foot the bill for Hayley. But then nor does it strain to hedge you into acknowledging that society would be in an even bigger mess if we did not help the Hayleys.

In Melinda Messenger's newest series on Channel 5, a game show called *Can We Still Be Friends?*, former couples get to win prizes by dishing dirt on former partners and rehashing the animosities that drove them apart. Is it that nobody else apart from Melinda Messenger wants anything to do with her? Hayley is no longer with the baby's father, hasn't any money, has no home and is relying on the social services to make her more comfortable. They give her a home — the baby had stopped acting like goons for the camera, Gower was recognised by some of Bombay's beautiful people —

BBC1

6.00am **Business Breakfast** (24537)
7.00 **BBC Breakfast News** (7) (46686)
9.00 **Kirby** (7) (9738265)
9.45 **Can't Cook, Won't Cook** (7) (889857)
10.15 **The Vanessa Show** (7) (409150)
11.00 **News; Weather** (7) (5973570)
11.05 **City Hospital** (7) (8898599)
11.55 **News; Weather** (7) (443042)
12.00 **Going for a Song** (7) (2736529)
12.25pm **Just a Minute** (7) (5856006)
12.55 **The Weather Show** (7) (1139924)
1.00 **One O'Clock News** (7) (49773)
1.30 **Regional News; Weather** (7) (59737976)
1.40 **Neighbours** Sarah gets an embarrassing surprise (7) (8898773)
2.05 **Through the Keyhole** (7) (5133159)
2.30 **Snooker: World Championship** Further coverage of day five. Presented by Dougie Donnelly (7) (376570)
3.25 **Children's BBC: Playdays** (8272570)
3.45 **Starfish Ponies** (4608334) 3.55 **Hubub** (5378599) 4.10 **Shirley Holmes** (7038792) 4.35 **The Demon Headmaster** (7277315) 5.00 **Newsround** (5209171)
5.10 **Pete Peter** (2060711)
5.35 **Neighbours** (7) (242112)
6.00 **Six O'Clock News; Weather** (7) (792)
6.30 **Regional News Magazine** (604)



A look at how a cricket ball reacts under different conditions (7pm)

7.00 **CHOICE** Tomorrow's World Peter Snow takes a look at the science of bowling in cricket (7) (9841)
7.30 **EastEnders** The police play the video tape (7) (228)
8.00 **Changing Rooms** The interior design challenge visits Eltham (7) (5888)
8.30 **Battalion Dogs** Home (7) (52434)
8.50 **The National Lottery: Greatest Hits** Toyah provides the live music as Angela Griffin presents the draw (7) (426333)
9.00 **Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather** (7) (933976)
9.34 **National Lottery Update** (237957)
9.35 **Men Behaving Badly** Questions are raised over Tony's sexuality, jeopardising Gary's hopes of indulging in a spot of male bonding (7) (275082)
10.00 **They Think It's All Over** (7) (2334)
10.30 **Harry Enfield's Television Programme Comedy** (7) (249605)
11.05 **Film 99 with Jonathan Ross** Includes reviews of *8mm and Message in a Bottle* (7) (634889)
11.35 **To Protect and Serve** (1992) Premieres. An honest cop witnesses a vicious case of police brutality ending in death, and soon fears for his own life. Thriller, starring C. Thomas Howell. Directed by Eric Weston (7) (21792)
12.55pm **Weather** (1059813)
1.00 **BBC News 24** (7931667)
1.30-9.34 **Party Election Broadcast** (7) (237957) 12.55pm-1.00 **News** (1059613)

SKY ONE

7.00 **Count Duckula** (69792) 7.30 **Godzilla** (85599) 8.00 **Pokemon** (70518)
8.30 **Hollywood Squares** 8.00 **Sally Struthers** (73889) 8.00 **Family Ties** (7) (409150)
8.30 **Winter Games** (7) (2736529) 8.45 **John Stossel** (7) (2736529) 8.50 **Death of a Salesman** (1957) (5856006)
9.00 **Exception to the Rule** (7) (67716) 9.40 **Any Place But Home** (7) (97367)
9.50 **SKY CINEMA**

9.45pm **The Hanging Tree** (7) (57605) 1.00 **Closing Scene** (7) (57605) 1.00 **Inside Out** (1975) (409150) 5.00 **Private Eyes** (1976) (57605) 7.00 **My Sister's Sister** (1957) (5856006)
8.00 **News Week in Review** (7) (409150) 8.00 **Ice** (1989) 8.15 **Death Warning** (1989) (5856006) 8.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 8.45 **70s** (7) (2736529) 8.50 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 8.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 9.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 9.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 9.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 9.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 9.50 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 10.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 10.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 10.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 10.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 10.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 11.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 11.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 11.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 11.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 11.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 12.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 12.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 12.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 12.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 12.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 13.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 13.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 13.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 13.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 13.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 14.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 14.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 14.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 14.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 14.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 15.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 15.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 15.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 15.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 15.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 16.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 16.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 16.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 16.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 16.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 17.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 17.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 17.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 17.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 17.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 17.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 18.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 18.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 18.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 18.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 18.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 18.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 19.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 19.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 19.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 19.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 19.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 19.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 20.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 20.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 20.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 20.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 20.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 20.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 21.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 21.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 21.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 21.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 21.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 21.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 22.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 22.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 22.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 22.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 22.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 22.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 23.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 23.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 23.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 23.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 23.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 23.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 24.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 24.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 24.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 24.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 24.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 24.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 25.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 25.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 25.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 25.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 25.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 25.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 26.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 26.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 26.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 26.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 26.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 26.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 27.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 27.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 27.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 27.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 27.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 27.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 28.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 28.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 28.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 28.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 28.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 28.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 29.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 29.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 29.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 29.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 29.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 29.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 30.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 30.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 30.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 30.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 30.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 30.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 31.00 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 31.15 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 31.30 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 31.45 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 31.55 **Two** (1989) (5856006) 31.55 **Two** (1

